SoundTransit

Editorial Style Guide

Updated March 2026

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How to use this guide

- **We don’t expect you to read all of this!** Instead, search using Ctrl + F.
- Familiarize yourself with this document so you know the general structure.
- Attend an information session.

- Ask an editor if you need assistance.

Plain language guidelines

We follow the Governor's plain language guidelines. Here are a few highlights from that list:

1. Sound Transit uses the serial (Oxford) comma. More on that in the punctuation entry.
2. En dashes can be used:
   - In date ranges/ranges in general:
   - *The station will be closed Aug. 29–31.*
   - *ST3 involves work that will go from 2019–2046.*
   - For routes: *510: Everett–Seattle.*
   - With unhyphenated compound adjectives: *the Angle Lake–bound train.*

3. No periods in cardinal directions. *NW*, not *N.W. S 4th,* not *S. 4th.*
4. Abbreviate *Blvd*, *Ave*, and *St* in station names and numbered addresses, no periods.
5. Do not use superscript for street names. *1st St*, not *1st St*.
6. We capitalize "Board" when we talk about ours, even though AP Style doesn't. It's an ST thing.

dates In reports, news releases and other materials for broad distribution, abbreviate Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec. when used with a specific date: *We opened the park-and-ride lot on Feb. 11, 1997*. Spell out these months in personal correspondence. Spell out when using a month alone or with a year alone. Do not separate the month and the year with a comma, unless used with a date: *We plan to open the park-and-ride lot in November 2018*. (Not November, 2018.)

- **Seasons**: Lowercase when preceding a year: *Northgate Station opened in fall 2021.*
- Do not follow numerals used with dates with ordinals (st, nd, rd or th). June 5th → *June 5*.

In most internal or social media communications, you don't need to include the year if writing about the current year.

- **NEEDS YEAR:** Documents for a project team or something that will need historic reference, a poster, invitation, or program. Most evergreen content on website should always include the year as well. *The University Link extension opened in March 2016*.
- **DOES NOT NEED YEAR:** Most other assets. Short-lived alerts, emails, tweets/social media posts, etc. If in doubt, ask an editor. *The employee training will be available on ST University beginning Sept. 20.*

Avoid references to relative dates such as *yesterday, today, tomorrow, next week, etc.*

Sound Transit services, line names, and route names

Link light rail

- **1 Line:** Current service runs between Lynnwood and Federal Way.
  - *Avoid "Central Link" and using "Link" alone when referring to the 1 Line.*

- **2 Line:** Current service runs between Lynnwood and Downtown Redmond.
  - *Avoid "East Link" in operational, passenger facing, or general public contexts. It's just the 2 Line.*

When referring to both the 1 Line and the 2 Line, Sound Transit's preferred phrasing is "1 Line and 2 Line." However, if space is truly limited or if using shields, it's permissible to say "1 and 2 Lines."

- **T Line:** Local rail service between Tacoma Dome Station and St. Joseph.
  - *Avoid "Tacoma Link" in operational, passenger facing, or general public contexts. It's just the T Line.*

Sounder trains

- **N Line:** Heavy rail service between Everett and Seattle, with four daily round trips.
  - *Avoid Sounder North, North Sounder, North Line, or northline.*
  - *Avoid "commuter rail" unless absolutely necessary.*

- **S Line:** Heavy rail service between Lakewood/Tacoma and Seattle, with 13 daily round trips.
  - *Avoid Sounder South, South Sounder, South Line, or southline.*
  - *Avoid "commuter rail" unless absolutely necessary.*

ST Express buses

- 510: Everett – Seattle

- 512: Everett – Lynnwood
- 513: Seaway TC – Lynnwood
- 515: Lynnwood – Seattle
- 522: Woodinville – Roosevelt
- 532: Everett – Bellevue
- 535: Lynnwood – Bellevue
- 542: Redmond – University District
- 545: Redmond – Seattle
- 550: Bellevue – Seattle
- 554: Issaquah – Seattle
- 556: Issaquah – University District
- 560: Bellevue – Sea-Tac Airport – West Seattle
- 566: Auburn – Redmond
- 574: Lakewood – Sea-Tac Airport
- 577: Federal Way – Seattle
- 578: Puyallup – Seattle
- 580: South Hill – Puyallup
- 586: Tacoma – University District
- 590: Tacoma – Seattle
- 592: DuPont – Seattle
- 594: Lakewood – Seattle
- 595: Gig Harbor – Seattle
- 596: Sumner – Bonney Lake

project and service names It is important to be consistent and use names that easily and logically convey our projects' benefits to the public. Please use these names in all communications, especially in public-facing communications. In public-facing materials, **avoid using project-name acronyms (ELE, LLE, HTLE, etc) wherever possible**, *particularly* in content where the eye will travel first, including headlines, subheads, captions or pull quotes. If you must use the formal project name, spell it out, as detailed below. It's best, however, to refer to the project in plain talk terms readers can see themselves experiencing (e.g., "our light rail extension connecting downtown Seattle to the Eastside") versus a construction project ("East Link Extension.") For internal or government-facing documents, initialisms (HTLE) are acceptable. Project names are for planning, design, engineering, and capital construction, as well as internal use. Once in operation, we retire project names and use station names instead. University Link Extension → *1 Line extension to Capitol Hill and University of Washington stations*.

project names by corridor

North Corridor

- Everett Link Extension

East Corridor

- South Kirkland-Issaquah Link*.
  - *This line is not an extension of an existing line, so we use different language.

South Corridor

- Federal Way Link Extension
- Tacoma Dome Link Extension
- TCC Link Extension

Central Corridor

- West Seattle Link Extension
- Ballard Link Extension
- S Graham St, S Boeing Access Road, NE 130th St Infill Stations

BRT

- I-405 BRT (when referring to operations, use Stride S1 Line or Stride S2 Line, as appropriate)
- SR 522/NE 145th BRT (when referring to operations, use Stride S3 Line.)

- Bus Base North

Sounder

- DuPont Sounder Extension
- Sounder South Capacity Expansion
- Auburn, Kent, Puyallup, and Sumner Stations Parking and Access Improvements
- Edmonds and Mukilteo Stations Parking and Access Improvements

Other

- Operations and Maintenance Facility East (on subsequent uses, refer to as OMF East)
- Operations and Maintenance Facility Central (OMF Central)
- Operations and Maintenance Facility South (OMF South)
- Operations and Maintenance Facility North (OMF North)

Consistent with ST's graphic design guidelines, using the acronym only (e.g., OMFS, OMFE, etc.) is acceptable in maps, tables, signage, or other condensed visual communications where space is limited — provided the full project or facility name appears spelled out in close proximity and will not cause reader confusion.

Station names

1 Line

- Lynnwood City Center Station
- Mountlake Terrace Station
- Shoreline North/185th Station
- Shoreline South/148th Station
- Pinehurst Station
- Northgate Station

- Roosevelt Station
- U District Station
- University of Washington Station
- Capitol Hill Station
- Westlake Station
- Symphony Station
- Pioneer Square Station
- International District/Chinatown Station (Int'l Dist)
- Stadium Station
- SODO Station
- Beacon Hill Station
- Mount Baker Station
- Columbia City Station
- Othello Station
- Rainier Beach Station
- Tukwila Int'l. Blvd. Station
- SeaTac/Airport Station
- Angle Lake Station
- Kent Des Moines Station
- Star Lake Station
- Federal Way Downtown Station

2 Line

- Lynnwood City Center Station
- Mountlake Terrace Station
- Shoreline North/185th Station
- Shoreline South/148th Station
- Pinehurst Station
- Northgate Station

- Roosevelt Station
- U District Station
- University of Washington Station
- Capitol Hill Station
- Westlake Station
- Symphony Station
- Pioneer Square Station
- International District/Chinatown Station
- Judkins Park Station
- Mercer Island Station
- South Bellevue Station
- East Main Station
- Bellevue Downtown Station
- Wilburton Station
- Spring District Station
- BelRed Station
- Overlake Village Station
- Redmond Technology Station
- Marymoor Village Station
- Downtown Redmond Station

Sounder

- Everett Station
- Mukilteo Station
- Edmonds Station
- King Street Station
- Tukwila Station
- Kent Station
- Auburn Station
- Sumner Station

- Puyallup Station
- Tacoma Dome Station
- South Tacoma Station
- Lakewood Station

T Line

- S 25th Station
- Union Station
- Convention Center Station
- Theater District Station
- Old City Hall Station
- S 4th Station
- Stadium District Station
- Tacoma General Station
- 6th Ave Station
- Hilltop District Station
- St Joseph Station

Route/line and station naming guidance

station naming

Avoid using “station” as a suffix for a station name when possible, including online maps, variable messaging systems, onboard audio, platform signs, and ticket machines. In narrative contexts, on corporate materials, or to explicitly describe a facility rather than a destination, freely use the word *station*. Capitalize *Station* when used directly following the station’s name, but in all other uses lowercase *station*.

- *Capitol Hill Station is temporarily closed.* NOT *Capitol Hill is temporarily closed.*
  Now arriving at Roosevelt. Next stop Northgate.
  The three stations on the Northgate extension are U District, Roosevelt and Northgate.
  NOT *Travel time from Othello Station to Rainier Beach Station is two minutes.*
- Exceptions include:
- *Union Station* on the T Line, where the “Union Station” refers to the name of the historic facility adjacent to it.
- *SeaTac/Airport Station* on the 1 Line, since the name of this station differs in spelling and punctuation from the official name of *Sea-Tac Airport*. Use *SeaTac/Airport Station* on all references.
- *King Street Station*, which appears on current platform signage. However, when possible, use Seattle (King Street) instead.

When **naming stations**, Sound Transit chooses names that are:

- Simple; One word, if possible.
- Uniquely identifying.
- Practical and easy to remember.
- Neighborhood-centered, if possible.
- However, if there is only one station in a city, use city name over neighborhood name (e.g. Mountlake Terrace).

For more information, see Board Resolution 2021-14.

route/line naming

Approach and convention for each mode

Sound Transit uses an alphanumeric system for line and route numbers, with the line name serving as the primary identifier. Each transit mode follows a distinct naming convention that is used exclusively for that mode:

Link light rail has five lines (three in service and two currently voter-approved), and it uses numbers and letters (1, 2, 3, 4, and T).

- Example: 1 Line, T Line. Future expansion (5, 6, etc.): example: 5 Line, 6 Line.

Sounder has two lines and uses letters to distinguish direction (N and S, for north and south).

- Example: N Line, S Line. Future expansions: TBD.

Stride bus rapid transit has three lines and uses a combination of letters and numbers (S1, S2, S3). Future expansion (S4, S5).

- Example: S4 Line .

ST Express has over 23 bus routes and uses a three-digit number beginning with the number 5 (512, 566, 596).

- Example: 596: Sumner – Bonney Lake.
- Future expansion example: 597: Issaquah – Sammamish.

Special service and route promotions

Mode names should be used only for their respective services to avoid passenger confusion. For example, do not use the word “Link” in promotions or service names for modes other than Link light rail.

Sources:
https://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/documents/sound-transit-line-naming-faq.pdf
https://www.soundtransit.org/blog/platform/new-line-names-coming-2021
https://www.soundtransit.org/get-to-know-us/our-brand/colors

Numbers

- Spell out most whole numbers below 10. Use figures for 10 and above: *five, nine, 15, 650*. Also, spell out *first* through *ninth* when they show sequence in time or location: *first base*, *Third Avenue*.
- **annual events**: AP spells ordinals of ninth and below and uses figures for 10th and above (this is within text; posters can use figures). Do not describe an event as annual until it has taken place at least two successive years. Capitalize *annual* if it is part of the formal name: *Third Annual Transit Festival*.
- **Avoid** beginning a sentence with a number. In general, if unavoidable, spell the number out: *Ten years was a long time to wait for a new station.* An exception is years: *2016 was a very good year for Sound Transit.*
- However, you can start a headline with a number: *8 ways to join Sound Transit's gift drive*.
- **Avoid** confirming a written number in a text by enclosing the numeral in parentheses. *The contract will expire in eight (8) days*.
- Use figures for all distances, including measures of numbers below 10: *He took the train for 4 miles* instead of *four miles*.
- Use figures with million, billion, or trillion in all except casual uses: *King County has over 2 million citizens, and many of them ride transit.* But: *I wish Sound Transit had a trillion dollars to spend*.
- Do not drop the word million or billion in the first figure of a range: *The project could cost $20 million to $25 million*, not *$20 to $25 million*, unless you really mean $20.
- Do not use a hyphen to join the figures and the word million or billion, even in this type of phrase: *The CEO submitted a $900 million budget.*
- In amounts more than a million—unless the exact amount is essential—round off to one decimal point. Write out the word million or billion: *The grant was for $6.5 million*. Not: *$6.517 million*.
- Do not use decimals with round numbers: *$2 billion*. Not: *$2.0 billion*.
- In headlines, maps, project alerts, mailers, etc., abbreviate only millions, billions. Use capital M and B with no space: *$5M project improvement, $17.4B trade deficit*.

ages For ages, always use numbers: *That Fare Ambassador is 21 years old.* If the age appears as an adjective or as a substitute for a noun, then hyphenate. *A 21-year-old passenger. Free Youth Fares cover 18-year-olds.* Don't use apostrophes when describing an age range. *The newest Engagement team member is in his 20s.*

cents For amounts less than a dollar, use figures for amounts and spell out and lowercase *cents*: *25 cents.* For larger amounts, use the $ sign and decimal system: *25 cents, $1.01, $4.50*. Do not use the cents symbol: *50¢*. Do not use zeros if there are no cents: *$6, not $6.00*. Including double zeroes is acceptable, however, when aligning multiple dollar amounts in charts and tables when some amounts include cents. See dollars.

dimensions Use figures for numbers and spell out *inches, feet, yards,* etc., to indicate depth, height, length, and width. Hyphenate adjectival forms before nouns. *The car is 10 feet, 6 inches tall. The 400-foot platform. The 10-mile alignment.*

dollars Lowercase this word. Beware of accidentally using the word dollars and the dollar sign with the same amount: $465 dollars. Except for casual references or amounts without a figure, use the $ sign instead: *The book cost $20. Dollars stopped flowing into King County*. See numbers**.**

time Lowercase and use periods for *a.m.* and *p.m*. Use numerals except for *noon* and *midnight*. Do not put a *12* in front of noon or midnight. Don't use *12 p.m.* or *12 a.m*.

- Times on the hour do not use zeros. Including double zeroes is acceptable, however, when aligning multiple times in charts and tables. Use a colon to separate hours from minutes: *1:30 p.m., 11 a.m., not 11:00 a.m.*
- Here are styles for giving ranges of time: *The hours are 8:30–10 a.m. and 6–9 p.m. (or 8:30 to 10 a.m. and 6 to 9 p.m.). Service will run from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., from noon to 1:30 p.m., from 1:30–3 p.m.)*.
- Avoid redundancies like *11:30 a.m. this morning* or *11:30 p.m. Tuesday night*. Instead, use *11:30 a.m. today, 11 p.m. Tuesday*.
- In general, when writing time frames, use an en dash with no spaces: *6:30–8 p.m.*

percentages Use the % sign when paired with a numeral, with no space, in most cases: *Average hourly pay rose 3.1% from a year ago*. Use figures: *1%*, *4 percentage points*.

- For amounts less than 1%, precede the decimal with a zero: *The cost of living rose 0.6%*.
- In casual uses, use words rather than figures and numbers: *She said he has a zero percent chance of ever driving a car again because transit availability improved so much.* Constructions with the percentage sign take a singular verb when standing alone or when a singular word follows an "of" construction: *He said 50% of the community was at the meeting.* Use a plural verb when a plural word follows an "of" construction: *He said 50% of the Board members were there.*
- Use decimals, not fractions, in percentages: *The farebox recovery rate is 49.5%.*
- For a range, *12% to 15%, 12–15%* and *between 12% and 15%* are all acceptable.
- Use *percentage*, rather than *percent*, when not paired with a number: *A small percentage of the people agreed.*

roman numerals Rarely but occasionally used. Use when discussing certain legislative acts, such as Title VI.

zero, zeros Don't include unnecessary zeros in times and dollar amounts: *10:00 a.m → 10 a.m., $35.00 → $35*.

Punctuation

apostrophes (') Follow these guidelines:

- **Plural nouns not ending in -s:** Add *'s*: *the community's contributions, women's rights.*
- **Plural nouns ending in -s:** Add only an apostrophe: *the communities' needs, the commuters' trains.*
- **Singular nouns not ending in -s:** Add *'s*: *the citizen's needs, the commuter's train.* Some style guides say that singular nouns ending in *s* sounds such as *ce, x*, and *z* may take either the apostrophe alone or *'s*. See **special expressions** below, but otherwise, for consistency and ease in remembering a rule, always use *'s* if the word does not end in the letter *s*.
- **Singular common nouns ending in -s:** Add *'s* (a change from previous guidance calling for just an apostrophe if the next word begins with *s*): *the hostess's invitation, the witness's answer*.

- **Pronouns:** Personal interrogative and relative pronouns have separate forms for the possessive. None involves an apostrophe: *mine, ours, your, yours, his, hers, its, theirs, whose*. Caution: If you are using an apostrophe with a pronoun, always double-check to be sure that the meaning calls for a contraction: *you're (you are), it's (it is), there's (there is), who's (who is)*.
- **Joint possession versus individual possession:** Use a possessive form after only the last word if ownership is joint: *Fred and Sylvia's commute*. Use a possessive form after both words if the objects are individually owned: *Fred's and Sylvia's commutes*.
- **Omitted letters:** Use an apostrophe to create a contraction: *I've, it's, don't, 'tis the season.*

commas

Sound Transit does use the serial (Oxford) comma.

- **With introductory clauses and phrases:** Very short introductory phrases don't require a comma unless it's unclear. *In 2017 the agency experienced …* A comma *is* used to separate an introductory clause or phrase from the main clause: *Exhausted by the terrible traffic, he started taking the 1 Line.*
- **With conjunctions:** When a conjunction such as *and, but,* or *for* links two clauses that could stand alone as separate sentences, use a comma before the conjunction in most cases: *She was glad she had looked, for her train was arriving.* As a rule of thumb, use a comma if the subject of each clause is expressly stated: *We are visiting Washington D.C., and we plan to see the White House. We visited Washington D.C., and our senator greeted us personally.* But no comma when the subject of the two clauses is the same and is not repeated in the second: *We are visiting Washington D.C. and plan to see the White House.*
- **Before *while***: *While* is a subordinating conjunction, but in some circumstances, it can act as an adverb of concession as well. In these circumstances it should have a comma before it.
    - Here's a great guideline: If you can replace *while* with *as*, then it shouldn't have a comma before it. It is just a normal subordinating conjunction. *The man left the restaurant while it was raining*. If you can replace *while* with *whereas,* then you should use a comma before it because it is being used as an adverb of concession. *The man left the restaurant, while his partner stayed.*
- **Before** which. If you don't need one, then use *that*.
    - **She took a blue bus that came every 15 minutes**.

        - **Her blue bus was always on time, which made her happy**.
    - **With equal vs. unequal adjectives**: Use commas to separate a series of adjectives equal in rank. If the commas could be replaced by the word *and* without changing the sense, the adjectives are equal: *a thoughtful, precise manner; a dark, dangerous street.* Use no comma when the last adjective before a noun outranks its predecessors because it is an integral element of a noun phrase, which is the equivalent of a single noun: *a cheap fur coat* (the noun phrase is *fur coat*); *the old oaken bucket; a new, blue spring bonnet*.
        - **TIP: If you can flip the adjectives, no comma**. If you can't, then add a comma.
    - **Introducing direct quotes:** Use a comma to introduce a complete one-sentence quotation within a paragraph. *Wallace said, "She spent six months in Amsterdam and came back obsessed with public transit."* But use a colon to introduce quotations of more than one sentence.
    - **At the start of an indirect or partial quotation**: No comma necessary. Correct: *He said the new extension put him "at the ideal spot to get anywhere in the city." Not: He said the new extension put him, "at the ideal spot to get anywhere in the city."*
    - **Before attribution**: Use a comma instead of a period at the end of a quote that is followed by attribution: *"Write clearly and concisely," she said.*
    - Do not use a comma, however, if the quoted statement ends with a question mark or exclamation point: *"Why should I?" he asked.*
- If using an individual's **age**, offset it with a comma: *Maude Findlay, 48, was present*.
- Use commas around names of states and nations used with city names: *His journey will take him from Dublin, Ireland, to Seattle, Washington, and back.*
- Use parentheses, however, if a state name is inserted within a proper name: *The Huntsville (Alabama) Times*. (Since this is a newspaper, you would not put it in italics, just straight text.)
- With yes and no: *Yes, I will be there*.
- In direct address: *Passengers, expect reduced 1 Line service this weekend.*
- In large figures: Use a comma for most figures greater than 999. The major exceptions are street addresses (1234 Main St.), broadcast frequencies (1460 kilohertz), room numbers, serial numbers, telephone numbers, and years (1876). See separate entries under these headings.

- Placement with quotes: Commas always go inside quotation marks.
- With full dates: When a phrase refers to a month, day and year, set off the year with a comma: *Feb. 14, 2020, is the target date*.

ellipses (. . .) In general, treat an ellipsis as a three-letter word, constructed with three periods and two spaces, as shown here.
Use an ellipsis to indicate the deletion of one or more words in condensing quotes, texts, and documents. Be especially careful to avoid deletions that would distort the meaning. An ellipsis also may be used to indicate a thought that the speaker or writer does not complete.

- If the words that precede an ellipsis constitute a grammatically complete sentence, either in the original or in the condensation, place a period at the end of the last word before the ellipsis. Follow it with a regular space and an ellipsis: *I no longer have a strong enough political base. . . .* When the grammatical sense calls for a question mark, exclamation point, comma or colon, the sequence is word, punctuation mark, regular space, ellipsis: *Will you come? . . .*
- When material is deleted at the end of one paragraph and at the beginning of the one that follows, place an ellipsis in both locations.

em dash, en dash Em dashes are long dashes (about the width of a capital M) that are stronger than commas or parentheses. Use them to signal abrupt change, with a space on both sides of a dash. *Example: The conductor — who had woken up late — was delighted that he made it to the station on time.* An en dash is about half the width of an em dash, approximating the width of a capital letter N. While AP style does not use en dashes, ST uses them in posters, maps, time ranges, and station pairs. In general, when writing time frames, use an en dash with no spaces: *6:30–8 p.m.* Also use when describing station pairs. *Trains will run from Northgate–Westlake only.* Also, use an en dash when using a compound adjective: *The Angle Lake–bound train.*

hyphens

- Hyphenate compound adjectives made of more than one word when they precede a noun. Do not hyphenate when they follow the noun: *This is an on-site building* (versus *the building is located on site*).
- **double vowels**: Hyphenate double-vowel words: *re-entry, re-engage*. Exceptions apply (*coordinate)*.
- Do not use hyphens when just discussing dimensions or distances, only when referring to or describing a noun: *The project consists of an 11.8-mile corridor (versus the corridor is 11.8 miles long). I ate a 2-foot-long hot dog* (versus *the hot dog is 2 feet long*).

- The following words are hyphenated: *High-capacity transit, long-range plan, low-income fare, pre-construction, right-of-way, park-and-ride, at-grade.*
- The following words are not hyphenated: *Light rail, 1 Line, 2 Line, groundwater, stormwater.*
- Generally, do not hyphenate when using a prefix with a word starting with a consonant. Thus: *subconsultant*.
- Words with “wide” are generally all one word (no hyphens): *Systemwide, departmentwide, agencywide, citywide, statewide, countrywide, corridorwide*.
- A suspended hyphen is a hyphen used when the other part of a compound word is supplied elsewhere. Use it as follows: *The agenda included a 10- to 15-minute period for questions. Dig a 3- to 5-inch-deep hole*.

periods

- Use periods to break up complicated sentences into two or more readable sentences. See sentence length.
- Use a period, not a question mark, after an indirect question: *He asked what the score was.*
- Don't put a space between two initials: *T.S. Eliot.*
- Periods always go inside quotation marks.

quotation marks If you have a running quote, which means it carries from one paragraph to the next, do not put close-quote marks at the end of the first paragraph. Do put open-quote marks at the start of the second paragraph. Continue for any succeeding paragraphs, using close-quote marks only at the end of the quoted material.

He said, "I expect the 2 Line to open in 2026.

"I am so confident, in fact, that I’ll bet my life on it."

- Do use close-quote marks if the quoted material does not constitute a full sentence.

  He said he was "hopeful that the 2 Line would open soon."
- Do not use quotation marks in formats that identify questions and answers by *Q:* and *A:*

semicolons Use semicolons sparingly, and only to separate parts of a series when at least one item in the series also contains a comma or the list items are long or complicated. *She wanted to ride on top of a light rail vehicle from Northgate to Federal Way; drive at least one ST Express bus down Issaquah’s main drag to prove that she’d finally made it big; and take a selfie from every floor of the 705 building so she could be the only Sound Transit employee with that honor.*

bulleted lists, lists Put a space between the dash or bullet and the first word of each item in the list. Capitalize the first word following the dash or bullet. Use periods, not semicolons, at the end of each section, whether it is a full sentence or a phrase. See one-word bullet lists as completing a single sentence with each bullet point.

The flag is:

- Red.
- White.
- Blue.

- Use your best judgment if creating bullet lists for a PowerPoint, postcard, poster or flyer. Sometimes periods just don't look right.
- Use parallel construction for each item in a list:
  - Start with the same part of speech for each item (in this example, a verb).
  - Use the same verb tense for each item.
  - Use the same sentence type (statement, question, exclamation) for each item.
  - Use the same voice (active or passive) for each item.
- Introduce the list with a short phrase or sentence: *Our partners:* or *These are our partners:* or *Our partners are:*

Alphabetical list of style guide entries

A

- abbreviations, acronyms
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- administration
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- affect, effect
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B

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C

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G

- goal setting or goal-setting
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- governor
- grade crossing

H

- hand-washing
- headlines
- headway
- heavy rail
- high-capacity transit
- high-occupancy vehicle
- high-occupancy vehicle lane
- high-speed rail
- highway designations
- him, her

I

- impact
- inter-
- intermodal

J

- judge
- judgment
- junior, senior

K

- kickoff
- King County Metro

L

- Lake Washington Ship Canal
- layover
- light rail
- limited English proficiency
- line names
- Link lines
- long range, long term

M

- man, manned, manning
- mid-
- miles
- miles per gallon
- miles per hour
- Minority/Women/Disadvantaged Business Enterprise
- mitigate
- modal names
- modal split, mode split
- more than vs. over
- motion, resolutions
- multimodal
- Mx.

N

- names
- nation
- National Environmental Policy Act
- non-
- northbound, southbound
- numbers/numerals

O

- off-peak
- off-site
- on

- on board, onboard, onboarding
- on-ramp/off-ramp
- on-site
- onto vs. on to
- Operations and Maintenance Facility
- ORCA, ORCA LIFT

P

- page numbers
- pandemic
- parentheses
- park-and-ride lot
- passengers
- passenger drop-off area
- passive voice
- peak vs. peek vs. pique
- per year, a year
- pickup, drop-off
- Pierce Transit
- plain language
- plans, projects, programs
- plurals vs. possessives
- point of view
- policymaker
- pre-
- prefixes
- preplanned
- presidential administration
- project and service names
- pronouns
- Puget Sound
- Puget Sound Regional Council
- punctuation

Q

- quarters
- question and answer
- quotation marks

R

- race, ethnicity
- railcar
- railroad
- ranges
- rapid transit
- re-
- redeploy
- redlining
- reverse commuting
- ride-hailing
- ride-sharing
- rider alert directionals
- ridership
- right-of-way, rights-of-way
- road
- route
- route number

S

- scoping notice
- scoping process
- SeaTac
- Sea-Tac Airport
- SeaTac/Airport Station
- Seattle-Tacoma International Airport
- The Seattle Times
- semicolons
- sentence length
- service names
- single-occupant vehicle
- SODO District
- Sound Move
- Sound Transit
- Sound Transit 2
- Sounder
- South Sound
- Southend
- split infinitives
- ST Express
- ST*art*

- State Environmental Policy Act
- state names
- station-area planning
- Stride lines
- sub-
- suffixes
- super-
- symbol

T

- T-Mobile Field
- Tacoma Link
- telephone numbers
- that, which
- that, who
- they, them, their
- ticket vending machine
- time
- titles
- transit center
- transit operator
- transit-oriented development
- transportation demand management
- Transportation Improvement Program
- Tribes, tribal
- trolley bus
- TTY

U

- union names
- University District
- University of Washington
- US vs U.S.

W

- -ward, -wards
- well
- well-being
- well-informed
- -wide
- workforce

Y

- years

Style guide entries

A

abbreviations and acronyms

- Do not use an abbreviation or acronym that the reader would not recognize quickly. **When in doubt, spell it out.**
- Avoid following the name of an organization, project, or program with an abbreviation or acronym in parentheses or set off by dashes. Not: *State Department of Ecology (DOE)*. If the abbreviation or acronym would not be clear to readers on second reference without the parenthesis, don't use it. Instead, use a shortened version of the name or a generic word, such as *the agency, the committee, the department, or the company*.
- Don't use periods in most abbreviations unless the result spells an unrelated word: *M.A.N. built the buses*.
- You may use many abbreviations in tabulations, certain types of technical writing, and internal reports and documents.
- If the meaning is clear, you may use abbreviations in headlines and headings.
- States (Read more under state names):
    - Avoid using state abbreviations in headlines whenever possible.
    - Always spell out the following states in datelines or text: Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas, and Utah.

accident Avoid the words *accident* or *crash* when referring to collisions between buses, trains, people walking, and/or people cycling. *Accident* implies that the event is unavoidable and implies a lack of fault by any party. Include a more specific word if you can. Examples: collision, overturned, head-on collision.

active vs. passive verbs Use active voice whenever possible. A verb is active when it shows that the subject acts or does something. A verb is passive when the subject of the verb is acted upon.

- *The bus was caught by the woman.* → *The woman caught the bus.*
- *The resolution was passed unanimously by the council.* → *The council passed the resolution unanimously.*
- The active voice is simpler, more direct, more forceful, and makes the subject take responsibility for actions.

- *Sounder riders were affected by mudslides on Monday* → *Mudslides delayed and canceled Sounder trains on Monday.*
- Also, avoid shifts between active and passive voice within a sentence.
- *Tommy was painting a few pictures when he ran to the window and cried out. → While painting, Tommy heard a noise outside and ran to the window.*

***HOWEVER,** there are times when the passive voice is appropriate*. If the **effect** is more important than the **actor**, then passive voice is OK. Just make sure to **only use it when it's appropriate**. Like this:

- *More than two thousand trains were delayed in the U.S. this year.*
- *That particular Link car had been hit a total of 12 times over its career.*

addresses

- Spell out and capitalize First through Ninth when used as a street name: *The bus drove down Second Avenue*.
- Use numerals with two letters for *10th* and above: *The bus goes down 22nd St*.
- Abbreviate *avenue*, *boulevard* and *street* as *Ave*, *Blvd,* and *St* in addresses, proper names, and station names with no periods: *Sound Transit is located at 401 S Jackson St; 1600 Pennsylvania Ave; Tukwila International Blvd Station*.
- Always capitalize the full name of a street, avenue, road, or boulevard when used without a number: *The bus driver lived on South Washington St; Pennsylvania Ave*. You may abbreviate the words *street, avenue, road,* and *boulevard* on later references.
- Lowercase and spell out *street*, *avenue*, *boulevard,* and *road* when using the plural forms: *The Bellevue Transit Center is between 108th and 110th avenues northeast on NE Sixth Street.* Uppercase and abbreviate those words when the form is not plural: *You can catch a bus on Second or Third Ave*. Also, lowercase and spell out *street, avenue, boulevard,* and *road* when using as improper nouns: *He rode the train down the tree-lined boulevard*.
- Abbreviate compass points (all caps, no periods) used to show directional ends of a street or quadrants of a city in a numbered address: *The building is at 543 NW 252nd St.*
- Do not abbreviate if omitting the number: *The building is on Northwest 252nd Street*.
- Abbreviate street names in tables or on maps and do not use periods. This is an exception to the rule about spelling out directional names without an address: *MLK Jr. Way S.*

- Always spell out words such as *alley*, *drive*, *road*, *way,* and *terrace*. Capitalize them when part of a formal name: *He worked on Holman Road Northwest*. Lowercase when used alone or with two or more names: *The crew will repave Holman and Somerset roads.*
- **Exceptions**: You can use abbreviations in situations when there are character limits for the copy. These exceptions are for maps, signage, and if the abbreviated form is in the official name of the center or station.

administration (presidential) *The Biden administration* (lowercase a). It is lowercase as a descriptive, collective term for the executive branch of government. Uppercase for various U.S. agencies, including the Federal Housing Administration, Food and Drug Administration, and National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

affect, effect Often misused or confused. Usually used as a verb, **affect** means "to influence, to have an effect on." *Construction will affect Link service.* **Effect** is usually a noun, meaning "result" or "consequence." *The delay had a detrimental effect on passenger morale.* Use impact sparingly.

agency Lowercase when standing alone or not the first word in a sentence. *The agency broke ground on the Lynnwood Link Extension.* See government bodies, capitalization.

alignment The horizontal and vertical path followed by a rail line, busway, transitway, or other public work. For public-facing documents, use *route* or *route and station locations* instead. *Alignment* is fine for technical documents.

at-grade, at grade Hyphenate when used as an adjective. *At-grade crossings.* No hyphen when used as a noun. *The project will be built at grade.* See hyphens.

B

bicycle When writing formally, use *bicycle*. When writing more informally, either *bike* or *bicycle* works.

books, periodicals, reference works and other types of compositions

- Use quotation marks around the titles of books, songs, television shows, computer games, poems, lectures, speeches and works of art. *Author Bob Wodnik read from his new book, "Back on Track."*
- Do not use quotations around the names of magazine, newspapers, or books that are catalogues of reference materials. *The Seattle Times first reported the story.*
- Do not underline or italicize any of the above.

Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, BNSF Use on first reference. *BNSF railway* or *BNSF* are acceptable on second reference.

bus, buses, busing Avoid jargony or branded terms such as Gillig or New Flyer or MCI. Acceptable descriptions include 40-foot, 60-foot, articulated, charter, double deck, double decker, intercity, etc. Use the verb forms bus, bused, busing. Not bussed, bussing, as are common in British English.

C

capitalization

In general, avoid unnecessary capitals. ***Highlighting words*** is easier to digest as a reader. If there is no listing in this manual for capitalizing a particular word, consult Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary or ask an editor. Avoid capitalizing all the letters in more than one or two words in a sentence. For emphasis instead, try other typographical uses: boldfacing, italics, color, or different typefaces.

Some basic principles:

- Proper nouns: Capitalize nouns that constitute the unique identification for a specific person, place, or thing: *Julie, Brooke, Seattle, United States, North America*. Some words, such as the examples just given, are always proper nouns. Some common nouns receive proper noun status when used as the name of a particular entity: *General Electric, Gulf Oil*.
- Lowercase agency when not just as the first word in a sentence. Correct: *The agency announced groundbreaking on the Lynnwood Link Extension.* See agency.
- Lowercase the common noun elements of names in plural uses: *Northgate and Roosevelt stations*. Exception: Capitalize plurals of formal titles with full names: *We asked Presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump*.

- Capitalize the names of rail stations or transit hubs: *International District/Chinatown Station.*
- Capitalize transit centers when using the full title: *Issaquah Transit Center*.
- Capitalize recognized districts: *Chinatown-International District, University District.*
- Capitalize *Sound Transit Board* or *Sound Transit Board of Directors* on all references. In a deviation from AP Style, uppercase *Board* when used alone in reference to the Sound Transit Board: *The Board will meet next Thursday*. The word remains lowercase (per AP Style) when referring to boards other than Sound Transit.
- Boardmember is **one word** and capitalized when it appears before a name. However, it is **two words** when referring to board members *(this same rule applies to Councilmember _____ and other council members): Boardmember Claudia Balducci toured the site. Claudia Balducci spoke to a room full of Board members (if the ST Board; board members if generic board).*
- Capitalize *chair* when used as a formal title before the name of a person in a council or committee position: *Sound Transit Board Chair Dave Somers spoke to the press*. Lowercase when used generically. *The chair called the meeting to order.*
- Spell out and capitalize the full name of the Sound Transit Board committees. The standing committees are: *Executive Committee, Rider Experience and Operations Committee, System Expansion Committee,* and *Finance and Audit Committee.* Avoid turning these names into initialisms.
- **city, cities:**
    - Capitalize the proper names of cities and towns in all uses. *Seattle, Lynnwood.*
    - Capitalize "City" when referring to municipal government along with the city's name. *City of Seattle.* Avoid using "city of Seattle" to reference the city itself — just say "Seattle."
    - Lowercase city in generic contexts and when the proper name is omitted. *Seattle is a beautiful city in Puget Sound. The Board came to a permitting agreement with the city.*
- **job titles**: Capitalize specific job titles preceding a person's name; do not capitalize descriptions.
    - For example, *Marketing Director John Doe* is correct, but *Marketing Chief John Doe* is not.
    - After a name, titles are lowercase regardless of whether they are specific or general. *Sound Transit's Chief Executive Officer Dow Constantine addressed a packed house*. *Dow Constantine, chief executive officer, has served in his role since 2025.*
    - Never capitalize ordinary job titles in isolation. *The bus driver asked for our passes* needs no emphasis.
    - If someone no longer holds a position, don't capitalize: *former marketing director John Doe*.

    - Summary: Only capitalize a job title if it is the exact wording, if it appears immediately before a name, and if it is not preceded by a qualifier (*former*, for example) or an article (a, an, the) or followed by a comma.
- Capitalize anything you are using as a proper name, including a job title or description when it is standing in for a name, *"I'll get right on it, Chief,"* but not *"I saw your supervisor yesterday."*
- Capitalize the full name of programs, projects or plans adopted formally by the Sound Transit Board. Otherwise, avoid capitalizing them. Always lowercase *program*, *project* or *plan* when the word stands alone or when using only part of the formal name. *The Sound Transit Board adopted the System Expansion Implementation Plan. The plan implements Sound Transit's expansion projects*. See projects and service names.
- Unless part of a formal name, Washington **s**tate is not capitalized; Washington State is a university. (Ignore spell check when it tries to capitalize outside this rule.)
- **committee**: Do not abbreviate. Capitalize when part of a formal name: *the System Expansion Committee*. Do not capitalize when used generically. *The committee approved the alignment.*
- Lowercase legislature when used generically: *No legislature has approved the amendment.*
- Capitalize *No-Build Alternative* and full names of alternatives: *Ballard Alternative, Tacoma Dome Alternative*, etc. Do not capitalize "alternatives" when used generically. *Sound Transit evaluated alternatives for the Ballard Station*.
- Capitalize recognized districts, for example*: Chinatown-International District, University District, Tacoma Theater District*. See University District.
- **Sound Transit departments**: In a departure from Associated Press style guidelines**, do** capitalize the names of all departments and divisions at Sound Transit and other agencies and organizations. *Communications Department.*
- **congressional**: Lowercase unless part of a proper name: congressional salaries, *the Congressional Quarterly*, *the Congressional Record*.
- **congressional districts**: Use figures and capitalize district when joined with a figure: *the 1st Congressional District*, *the 1st District*. Lowercase *district* whenever it stands alone.

cardinal directions Do not capitalize north, south, east, or west unless part of a proper name. Never spell out in street names.

Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority Sound Transit's legal name. Use only in contracts and Board motions, actions, and resolutions. Do not refer to the agency as the RTA.

citizen In most cases, use *resident* instead, unless referring only to people with full citizenship.

co- Retain the hyphen when forming nouns, adjectives, and verbs that indicate occupation or status:
co-author | *co-pilot*
co-chairperson
co-defendant | *co-signer*
co-host | *co-sponsor*
co-owner | *co-star*
co-partner | *co-worker*

colon capitalization Capitalize the first word after a colon only when it's a proper name or the start of a complete sentence or the first word in bulleted lists.

commas See punctuation section.

commuter rail Acceptable in limited contexts, but use *Sounder trains* instead when possible when referring to overall Sounder service, or use *S Line* and *N Line* when referring to a single line.

composition titles Capitalize all words in a title except articles (a, an, the); prepositions of three or fewer letters (for, of, on, up, etc.); and conjunctions of three or fewer letters (and, but, for, not, or, so, yet, etc.) unless any of those start or end the title. This applies to books, reports, long poems, long musical compositions, movies, newsletters, plays, and works of art such as paintings and sculpture.

- Capitalize an article — a, an, the — or words of fewer than four letters if they serve as the first or last word in a title.

D

deafblind Having a severe impairment of both hearing and vision. This term is the accepted term for a person who is both blind and deaf. Always use person-first language: A person who is deafblind.

departments and divisions Capitalize the names of all Sound Transit departments and divisions.

Department of Transportation Refer to the Washington State Department of Transportation as the *state Department of Transportation*. Do not use abbreviations or acronyms, such as WSDOT, on first reference.

design-build Hyphenate it, and lowercase unless part of a formal name.

diagonal to or **diagonally across from** Both are preferable to *kitty-corner.*

directional words ending in -ward Virtually none of the following directional words ending with this suffix end with an s: *Toward, backward, forward, downward, upward, onward, outward, inward, southward, skyward, Earthward, heavenward, homeward*.

disabled See CREI Inclusive Language guide.

diversity See CREI Inclusive Language guide.

dollars see “numbers.”

double decker In an exception to AP Style and Merriam-Webster, Sound Transit treats *double decker* as a two-word noun. Hyphenate if using it as an adjective before a noun, so *double-decker bus*.

downtown Lowercase unless part of a formal name: *downtown Tacoma and downtown Seattle, but the Downtown Seattle Association*.

Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel, DSTT: An outdated term for the four Link stations in downtown Seattle originally opened by King County Metro as a bus tunnel in 1990. Do not use this term, especially in public-facing documents. If there is an instance requiring description of Link stations located in downtown Seattle, you can use *downtown Link stations* or *downtown tunnel stations*. If necessary to describe its distinct station designs or maintenance needs, use *former: All Link stations opened after 2009, except for the four former Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel stations, which opened for bus service in 1990.*

E

Eastside Capitalize when referring to the area that includes Bellevue, Kirkland, Redmond, and other King County communities east of Lake Washington.

elderly Use this word carefully and sparingly. It is appropriate in generic phrases that do not refer to specific people: *concern for elderly people*, *service for the elderly*. Try phrases like *people in their 70s and older* instead. Apply the same principles to terms such as *senior citizen*.

ensure, insure, assure Use *ensure* to mean guarantee: *They took steps to ensure accuracy*. Use *insure* for references to insurance: *The policy insures his life*. Use *assure* to mean to make sure or give confidence: *She assured us the statement was accurate*.

Environmental Impact Statement, EIS A comprehensive study of likely environmental impacts resulting from major federally assisted projects; the National Environmental Policy Act requires such statements. Spell out on first reference. EIS is acceptable on second reference. Capitalize only when used as part of a proper title: *The Everett Link Environmental Impact Statement*. Avoid overuse of the abbreviation by substituting *impact statement*. Always spell out *draft*, *final* or *supplemental* when used with the document: *The project team printed the draft EIS last month. The supplemental impact statement is ready for printing.* Not: *The project team printed the DEIS. The SEIS is ready*.

F

Fare Ambassadors Sound Transit employees who hold riders accountable for fare compliance. Always capitalize both words. But “shift ambassador” (internal use only) is lowercase.

federal Lowercase when used as an adjective: *federal Department of Transportation* and *state Department of Transportation*. Always lowercase the phrase *federal courts*. Use the proper name of the court on first reference. Use a capital letter for corporate or governmental bodies that include the word as part of their formal names: *United Parcel Service, the Federal Trade Commission.*

G

goal setting or goal-setting Hyphenate as modifier, otherwise not. *The goal-setting document included everyone’s input. She took part in the team’s goal setting.*

government Always lowercase, never abbreviate: *the state government, the U.S. government*.

governmental bodies Capitalize the full, proper names of federal, state and local governmental agencies, departments and offices: *the U.S. Department of State*, *the state Department of Transportation*, *King County Department of Public Works*. Also, capitalize the shortened version: *the State Department*, *the Ecology Department*, *Public Works Department*. Lowercase condensations of the name: *the department, the agency, etc*.

governor Abbreviate and capitalize before a name: *Gov. Ferguson.* Lowercase after a name and when standing alone. *The governor took the train.* In business correspondence, spell out before a name. *Governor Ferguson took the train.*

H

headlines

Only capitalize proper nouns and the first word in headlines (this includes titles of PowerPoint slides, too).

More effective: different typefaces, italics, boldfacing, larger type. You may use figures for numbers in headlines. See abbreviations and acronyms; capitalization; numbers, numerals.

- Punctuate headlines like sentences. Some exceptions: A comma may substitute for the word "and;" use semicolons instead of periods to show sentence breaks within the headline. *Train derails, engineer happy to be alive*
- Omit end punctuation after a headline.
- Use single quotation marks instead of double quotation marks in headlines. In quote attribution, colons may substitute for "said" after the speaker's name (before a statement), and dashes may substitute for "said" before the speaker's name (after a statement).
- Avoid using passive voice in headlines.
- Infinitive phrase is preferred to future tense: *CEO to speak, not CEO will speak*.

highway designations For highways identified by number, spell out and capitalize on first reference: *Highway 99, U.S. Route 2, Interstate 5, State Route 520*. On second reference, abbreviate interstates and state routes. Capitalize and use a hyphen for interstates: *I-405, I-5*. For state highways, do not use a hyphen*: SR 520*.

him, her Never presume maleness in constructing a sentence. When the subject's pronouns aren't known, use the pronoun *they* as a singular with a plural verb: *The official said they are afraid for their safety.* Be sure the context clarifies that only one person is involved. See they, them, their.

I

impact Do not use as a verb to mean affect: *This closure will impact …* or as a noun to mean effect: *This closure has community impacts*. Consider using *affect* or *influence*, or use more specific language such as *This closure will delay trips by five minutes.* As a verb, only use

impact to mean to force tightly together, pack or wedge, or to hit with force. Try to void “impacted” and “impactful.” Note: It’s OK to use *impact* in the context of official government language, such as environmental impact statements.

inter- No hyphen: *interagency.*

intermodal Used to denote movements of cargo or passengers interchangeably between transport modes. **Avoid** when writing (or speaking) to general audiences. For example: *The Tacoma Dome Station is a transit hub for many types of transportation (or transportation modes)*.

J

judge Capitalize before a name when it is the formal title for an individual who presides in a court of law. Do not continue to use the title in second reference. Do not use court as part of the title unless confusion would result without it. No *court* in title: *U.S. district Judge John Bates, federal Judge John Bates, appellate Judge Priscilla Owen*. *Court* needed in the title: *Juvenile Court Judge John Jones, state Supreme Court Judge William Cushing*.

junior, senior Abbreviate as Jr. and Sr. only with full names, and do not precede with a comma. Do not separate the abbreviations from the name with a comma*: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.* or *Joseph P. Kennedy Jr.* Similarly, do not use a comma to separate Roman numerals from a person's name: *Larry Moe IV is losing his patience.*

K

kickoff As a verb, *kick off* (two words; not hyphenated). As a noun or adjective, *kickoff* (one word).

King County Metro The primary provider of bus service in King County. King County Metro operates some of Sound Transit’s ST Express routes and Link lines. Use King County Metro on the first reference; Metro is acceptable on second reference. Do not use the acronym KCM in public-facing communication.

L

Lake Washington Ship Canal Lake Washington Ship Canal runs from Lake Washington to the Puget Sound and encompasses the Montlake Cut and Portage Bay. Use full name on first reference. Ship canal (lowercase) is acceptable on second reference.

layover (n.), **lay over** (v.) Time built into a schedule between arrival at the end of a route and the departure for the return trip, used for delay recovery and preparation for the return trip.

light rail The term light rail is derivative of the traditional term heavy rail. Whenever possible, use *Link* or *Link trains* instead.

- Light rail may have at-grade operations or may be mostly or fully grade-separated. *Heavy rail* is generally understood to mean fully grade-separated trains with traditional third rail or induction motor power with longer trainsets.
- In an exception to AP style, do not hyphenate *light rail* when used as an adjective.
- **Central Link, Airport Link, U Link, University Link, etc.** Legacy names for previous extensions. Do not use in public documents unless referring to past construction or project management. Use either service line names (1 Line, T Line, etc) or approved project names (East Link, Lynnwood Link etc).

light rail vehicles Use Series 1, Series 2, and Series 3 exclusively, unless the original vendor's name is required by context, such as when discussing contracts or other vendor-agency relationship issues. For public use, whenever possible, the 'series' language should prevail.

limited English proficiency Avoid the jargon and write: *A person with limited English* or *A person with limited proficiency in English*.

line names Sound Transit names most services with numbers and/or letters. It is important to use official service line names and not legacy names (such as Central Link, U Link etc). Visit soundtransit.org/brand for official guidance on using line names, colors, and logos.

Link lines

- *1 Line* – Link light rail between Lynnwood and Federal Way, using a circular green shield and green line color.
- *2 Line* – Link light rail between Lynnwood and Downtown Redmond, using a circular blue shield and a blue line color. Crosslake Connection opened in March 2026.
- *3 Line, 4 Line* – Future lines between Everett – West Seattle (3 Line) and Issaquah – Kirkland (4 Line).
- *T Line* (Effective September 2023) – Formerly Tacoma Link; operates between Tacoma Dome and St. Joseph Hospital on Hilltop, uses a circular orange shield and an orange line color.

Sounder lines

- *N Line* – Formerly Sounder North. Operates between Everett and Seattle, using a circular blue-grey shield and line color.
- *S Line* – Formerly Sounder South. Operates between Lakewood and Seattle, using a circular blue-grey shield and line color.

Stride lines (bus rapid transit)

Stride lines will have a route number with an S prefix (S1, S2, S3, etc.), in order by opening date. They will share a square gold shield and line color.

- *S1 Line* – Will operate between Bellevue and Burien.
- *S2 Line* – Will operate between Lynnwood and Bellevue.
- *S3 Line* – Will operate between Shoreline and Bothell.

General line usage guidelines

- Always refer to numerical lines with a numeral, not a word. *1 Line*, not *One Line*.
- Capitalize Line when used with its indicator, lowercase otherwise. *The 3 Line runs from Everett to West Seattle. Link has five train lines: 1, 2, 3, 4 and T.*
- Do not refer to a line by its color on the map, *Green Line*, etc.
- The line indicator should always precede the word *line*. *1 Line*, not *Line 1*.
- Use of the word “line” as a suffix is not required but is preferred whenever its omission may cause the line number to be mistaken for a quantity. *2 Line trains will not serve Mercer Island today. NOT 2 trains are serving …*

Transition between capital projects and operating lines

When referring to extensions of current service during construction phases, continue referring to their official project name. When describing current or future service patterns, use the line name. *The Federal Way Link Extension adds three new 1 Line stations and will open in 2026,* or *The Lynnwood Link Extension will bring four new stations to Shoreline, Mountlake Terrace, and Lynnwood. Riders will be able to take the 1 Line as far as Federal Way or the 2 Line as far as Redmond.*

long range, long term Hyphenate when used as a compound adjective: *long-range plan, long-term plan*.

M

man, manned, manning Outdated. Do not use man as a verb. Use staff instead or forms of use, operate, work or run. Change: *Three employees man the office* to *Three employees staff the office*.

mid- No hyphen unless a capitalized word follows: *midday, midair, mid-America, mid-Atlantic*.

miles Use figures for miles, including for amounts under 10, in dimensions, formulas, and speed: *The land measured 2 miles by 3 miles. The bus traveled 60 miles per hour. The coach gets 6 miles per gallon.*

miles per gallon The abbreviation *mpg* (lowercase, no periods) is acceptable on second reference.

miles per hour The abbreviation *mph* (lowercase, no periods) is acceptable in all references.

Minority/Women/Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Spell out on first reference. M/W/DBE is acceptable on second reference in internal documents. Capitalize when referring to the program. Lowercase when referring to a minority business enterprise, a women business enterprise or a disadvantaged business enterprise.

mitigate Means to moderate or to make or become milder, less severe, less rigorous, less painful, less harsh, or less hostile. If possible, consider using a synonym for mitigate, such as moderate, compensate for, ease, soften, relieve, or reduce, or define the word: *Sound Transit will mitigate, or reduce, the environmental impacts*. Also, do not say "mitigate against."

more than versus **over** Generally, use more than when referring to numbers and over when referring to spatial elements. For example: *We counted more than 100,000 riders*. *The cow jumped over the moon*.

motion, resolutions The Sound Transit Board adopts motions and resolutions. Capitalize *motion* and *resolution* when referring to a specific Sound Transit Board motion or resolution and abbreviate Number (No.): *The Board will consider Resolution No. 1112 and Motion No. 4119 Thursday*. Lowercase when standing alone.

multimodal Most often used to describe a location, site, or transit center that connects two or more kinds of transportation modes. For example, Tacoma Dome Station, with access to commuter rail, light rail, and regional express and local buses, is a multimodal station. Avoid using intermodal and multimodal when writing or speaking to general audiences. These words are transit jargon. Instead, try: *Tacoma Dome Station is a hub for many modes of transportation*.

N

names Always use a person's first and last name the first time they are mentioned in a story. Only use last names on second reference. Do not use courtesy titles such as Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Ms. unless they are part of a direct quotation or are needed to differentiate between people who have the same last name.

National Environmental Policy Act A comprehensive federal law requiring analysis of the environmental impacts of federal actions such as approval of grants; also requiring preparation of an environmental impact statement for every major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Spell out and capitalize on first reference. NEPA is acceptable in later references.

non- The rules of prefixes apply, but in general no hyphen when forming a compound: *nonrevenue, nonessential*. However, use a hyphen before proper nouns. Examples of compounds with special meanings include names with proper nouns: *non-U.S. government questions, non-Ambassador, non-Euclidean geometry, non-Hodgkin lymphoma*.

northbound, southbound One word.

numbers/numerals See Numbers section.

O

off-peak Hyphenate. Try to use simpler language such as “outside commute hours.”

off-site Hyphenate. Hyphenate compound adjectives made of more than one word when they precede a noun. Do not hyphenate when they follow the noun: *This is an on-site building (versus the building is located on site).*

on Only use on before a date or day of the week when it makes things clearer, except at the beginning of a sentence: *The meeting will take place Monday*. *His inauguration will be Jan. 20*. *On Sept. 3, the committee will meet to discuss the issue*. Use on to avoid an awkward juxtaposition of a date and a proper name: *John met Mary on Monday*. *He told President Obama on Thursday that the bill was doomed*.

on board, onboard, onboarding One word as a modifier: *There was onboard entertainment.* But: *Let program leads know you are on board to help! Onboarding for new employees will take place tomorrow.*

on-ramp Hyphenate. Also, *off-ramp*.

on-site Hyphenate for all uses as an adjective or adverb.

Operations and Maintenance Facility Spell out (lowercase *and*; do not use an ampersand) and add the directional on the end without a hyphen, dash or colon. *Operations and Maintenance Facility East*, *Operations and Maintenance Facility South*. Operations and Maintenance Facility East (on subsequent uses, refer to as *OMF East* and *OMF South*). Consistent with ST's graphic design guidelines, use of acronym only (e.g., OMFSE, OMFS, etc.) is acceptable in maps, tables, signage, or other condensed visual communications where space is limited, provided the full project name appears spelled out nearby and will not confuse the reader.

ORCA, ORCA LIFT All capitals, no periods*. ORCA stands for One Regional Card for All*. *ORCA LIFT* should also be all capitals, no periods.

P

page numbers Use numerals and capitalize page when used with a figure: Page 1. Spell out and capitalize the page numbers lower than 10 in business correspondence: *Page Five*.

parentheses Use parentheses sparingly. AP does not follow a full term with the abbreviation in parentheses, but prefers the abbreviation in a follow-up or substitutes a shorthand form of the full term to avoid an abbreviation that may not be well-known to audiences.

park-and-ride A parking lot where transit riders can leave their cars and ride transit, carpool, or vanpool to another location.

- For news releases, news stories, and texts, capitalize the P and R and hyphenate *Park-and-Ride*, *Federal Way Park-and-Ride lot, Mercer Island Park-and-Ride lot.*
- When connected to a Link or Sounder station, use the station name instead. *Parking is available in the Angle Lake Station garage, not the Angle Lake park-and-ride.*
- Lowercase *park-and-ride* when not used with a formal name.
- Avoid using *facility* or *facilities* unless the text becomes redundant.
- Do not use an ampersand (&) for the word "and" in *park-and-ride* in most written materials. You may use the ampersand for signs, maps, and in advertising copy such as marketing brochures.

peak vs. peek vs. pique A peak is a noun meaning a mountaintop or height. *Trains arrive every six minutes during peak times.* Peek is a verb or a noun meaning “to look” or “a look.” *Go peek through that window.* Pique means to stimulate interest or curiosity. *His idea to rejuvenate transit in the area piqued my curiosity.*

Pierce Transit A Sound Transit partner agency. Pierce Transit operates the ST Express regional buses that serve Pierce County, with some King County service.

plain language Also called plain English, or plain talk, plain language is communication your audience can understand the first time they read or hear it. Short sentences, 10-15 words or fewer, are good for emphatic, memorable statements. Longer sentences, no more than about 30 words, are good for detailed explanation and support. Try to include only one idea in a sentence, with an average length of 20 to 25 words.

plans, projects, programs Capitalize the full name of programs adopted formally by the Sound Transit Board. Otherwise, avoid capitalizing them. Always lowercase *program*, *project*, or *plan* when the word stands alone or when using only part of the formal name: *The project is underway*. Avoid interchanging the words *program*, *project*, or *plan* within a text.

point of view When writing for Sound Transit (speaking for the agency), generally use first person plural pronouns (we, us, our).

- When writing for internal employee publications, generally use second or third person, unless you are writing under a byline. Avoid the use of “we” in writing for internal communications because with so many teams, divisions and departments, readers may not know who is talking to them.

pre- Generally, do not hyphenate. A 2019 change in the AP Stylebook: Do not hyphenate double-e combinations with pre- and re-. Examples: *preelection, preeminent, preempt, preestablished, preexisting*. However, do hyphenate *pre-convention, pre-construction, pre-noon*.

prefixes Usually, follow these rules for adding a prefix:

- Don't hyphenate when using a prefix with a root word that begins with a consonant: *rerelease*.
- Use a hyphen if the prefix ends in a vowel and the root word that follows begins with the same vowel: *re-emerge*.
- Insert a hyphen if the first listing of the word includes one.

- If the word is not hyphenated or not listed, drop the hyphen.
- In addition, use a hyphen when capitalizing the root word: *the post-Westlake leg of the trip*.
- Use a hyphen to join doubled prefixes: *sub-subcommittee*.
- At times, a hyphen is necessary for clarity of meaning: *We will reform [correct or improve] the transit system. She will re-form [change the shape of] the ERG.*

pre-revenue Use hyphen.

presidential administration It is the Biden administration (lowercase a), per administration entry. Reason (per AP Stylebook): It is lowercase as a descriptive, collective term for the executive branch of government. The lowercase usage helps differentiate it from the formal names of various U.S. agencies, including the Federal Housing Administration, Food and Drug Administration, and National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Generic use of administration without its current occupant is always acceptable, e.g. "the administration."

pronouns See him, her and they, them, their and the Inclusive language guide.

Puget Sound Use Puget Sound on first reference when referring to the body of water. In an exception to AP style, use uppercase Sound on future references when the word stands alone: *The train tracks encircle the Puget Sound. Train travelers love the panoramic views of the Sound.* Do not use Puget Sound alone but add the term Central when referring to the region Sound Transit serves: *the Central Puget Sound region*.

Puget Sound Regional Council Formerly the Puget Sound Regional Council of Governments. PSRC is the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization. Spell out on first reference and use PSRC on all other references.

punctuation See Punctuation section.

Q

quarters When referring to financial calendar periods, use this format: *Q1.*

question and answer Write as *Q&A*, no spaces.

quotation marks see Punctuation section.

R

race, ethnicity See “race” section in CREI’s Equity and Inclusion Shared Language Guide.

ranges The form: *$12 million to $14 million*. Not: *$12 to $14 million*. Also: *A pay increase between 12% and 15%,* or *A pay increase of 12 percent to 15 percent*. For full calendar years, hyphenated *2015-16* is acceptable. Also acceptable per AP: *2018-2019*. See percentages.

rapid transit A transit system serving an urban area using relatively high-speed rail cars or buses in exclusive rights-of-way, with few grade crossings.

re- Generally do not hyphenate, except as noted in the prefixes entry. A 2019 change: In recognition of common usage, do not hyphenate double-e combinations with re- and pre-. Examples: *reelect, reemerge, reemphasize, reemploy, reenact, reengage, reenlist, reenter, reequip, reestablish, reexamine*. It is also important to consider the meaning of the word: *recover (regain) vs. re-cover (cover again); reform (improve) vs. re-form (form again); resign (quit) vs. re-sign (sign again), re-create (create again) vs. recreation (play), re-dress a child, but redress a problem.*

rider-alert directionals As Sound Transit opens more Link light rail lines, announcements referencing northbound/southbound or inbound/outbound directionals won’t always make sense geographically. For consistency and rider clarity, please refer to the route terminus:

Escalators are out of service on the Redmond platform at Judkins Park Station. The Route 542 bus to the University District will arrive in 1 minute.

ridership The number of one-way rides taken by people using a public transportation system in a given time period. Measure rides by each individual boarding. A rider who transfers from one vehicle to another is counted as taking two rides.

right-of-way, rights-of-way Land acquired for, used by or occupied by a transportation service, including unused space along edges or medians. AP does not hyphenate; Sound Transit and King County Metro both do. The plural is *rights-of-way,* not *right-of-ways*.

road Capitalize when part of a formal name. Lowercase when used alone or with two or more names. Do not abbreviate: *We drove down Holman Road. The crew will pave Altamont and Pine roads.*

round trip Two words as a noun but hyphenated as an adjective. *He made a round trip on Route 592. He bought a round-trip ticket.*

route number Do not abbreviate *route*. The preferred usage for bus route designation is to capitalize Route and follow with the number: *Route 550, Route 595*. Lowercase when the reference is to two or more routes: *routes 550 and 595*. On first reference, refer to all Sound Transit buses as follows: *ST Express Route 590*.

S

scoping process Project Scoping is the process of defining project objectives, developing project delivery plans, and defining important elements of the project (location, schedule, and budget), to help keep the project on track to successfully achieve objectives. Scoping is the first step necessary to develop an environmental impact statement to assess the probable environmental effects of a project. Scoping determines what to analyze in an EIS and eliminates alternatives from further study. **Explain** if used in public-facing communications.

SeaTac The city in south King County. No space or hyphenation between Sea and Tac.

SeaTac/Airport Station Sound Transit's Link light rail station. This custom usage intends to be inclusive of both the city of SeaTac and the airport.

Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, or acceptable on second reference, **Sea-Tac Airport** To avoid confusion with the city of SeaTac, avoid using Sea-Tac alone. Use the hyphen only when referring to *Sea-Tac Airport*.

single-occupant vehicle (SOV) A motor vehicle carrying only one person. Spell out. Avoid abbreviation SOV. You may also use solo where contextually appropriate, e.g., *solo driver permits* instead of "SOV permits."

Sound Move, Sound Transit 2, Sound Transit 3 The name of the voter-approved packages in 1996, 2008, and 2016 respectively. When possible, use *system expansion* instead of referring to specific vote packages.

Sound Transit The Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority operates under this name. Use Sound Transit alone in most cases, but use the legal name — The Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority — in contracts, board resolutions, and actions. Two words. Do not use all capital letters. See **Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority**.

Sounder Just say *Sounder* on all references. Do not use all uppercase letters. For the service between Lakewood/Tacoma and Seattle, use *S Line*. For the service between Everett and Seattle, use *N Line*. Do not use Sounder North, Sounder South, North Sounder, South Sounder, Sounder north line, or Sounder south line. Use "commuter rail" very sparingly and only when necessary to distinguish it from Link or Amtrak.

South Sound A geographic name referring to south King, Pierce, and Thurston counties.

Southend Use more precise area names if possible, such as Rainier Beach, Burien, Kent, Federal Way, and South King County, which is an increasingly accepted term to refer to areas between Seattle and the Pierce County line.

split infinitives Split infinitives are sentence constructions that split the infinitive forms of a verb by putting a word or words between *to* and the verb, such as *to quickly leave*. Splitting infinitives is grammatically correct and can strengthen the meaning of a sentence by placing the modifying word or words before the verb they're modifying: *To boldly go where no transit agency has gone before.*

ST Express Sound Transit's regional bus routes operating predominantly on the state's high-occupancy vehicle lanes. Do not use the outdated term Regional Express or REX.

ST*art* Name of Sound Transit's art program. Use full title on first reference: *Start, Sound Transit's Art Program*. *STart* is acceptable on later references.

State Environmental Policy Act Spell out and capitalize on first reference. SEPA is acceptable in later references.

station-area planning Planning activities in the area immediately surrounding a transit station. Station-area planning usually defines the neighborhood vision in terms of neighborhood character and plans for accommodating any expected growth or development.

sub- In general, do not hyphenate when using a prefix with a word starting with a consonant, thus: *subconsultant, subrecipient*. See hyphens.

suffixes If a word combination does not appear in Webster's New World (or has a separate listing in the AP Stylebook), use two words for the verb form but hyphenate any noun or adjective forms.

super- In general, no hyphen. Superagency, superhighway, supermajority.

symbol A sign, shape, or object that is used to represent something else.

T

T-Mobile Park Baseball stadium in the SODO District, formerly Safeco Field.

Tacoma Link Official name has changed to the **T Line**. The 1.6-mile light rail system with twelve stations running from Tacoma Dome Station to St. Joseph.

telephone numbers Ten numbers only. Do not use a +1 in front of the phone number for long distance and toll-free numbers, and use a hyphen, not parentheses, to separate the area code from the rest of the phone number: *206-937-XXXX*, *800-XXX-XXXX, XXX-NU2-XXXX, XXX-FOR-FREE (367-3733)*. Don't use periods instead of hyphens. For extension numbers, abbreviate and lowercase extension, and separate it with a comma from the main number: *937-XXXX, Ext. XXX*. See hyphens. TTY relay should now be *TTY: 711*.

that, which *that* is the defining, or restrictive, pronoun for essential clauses: *The lawn mower that is broken is in the shop (tells which one)*. *Which* is the nondefining, or nonrestrictive, pronoun for nonessential clauses: *The lawn mower, which is broken, is in the shop (adds a fact about the only mower in question)*. See that, who below.

- In the examples above, note the correct use of commas: *which* clauses are set off off with commas (or sometimes dashes or parentheses), and *that* clauses aren't. You cannot cut essential clauses without changing the meaning of a sentence. Do not set off an essential clause from the rest of a sentence with commas. You can drop nonessential clauses without changing the meaning. Set off a nonessential clause with commas.

that, who When an essential or nonessential clause refers to a human being or an animal with a name, introduce the clause with who (or whom). Do not use commas to separate the who clause from the rest of the sentence if the clause is essential to the meaning of the sentence: *The rider who called the security line …* If the clause is not essential to the meaning, use who: *Julie, who lives in West Seattle, ...* That is the preferred pronoun to introduce essential clauses that refer to an inanimate object, an animal without a name, and other things: *Greg built the house that burned down Tuesday*. (Which is the only acceptable pronoun to introduce a nonessential clause that refers to an inanimate

object: *The station, which our contractor built, burned down Tuesday*.) See that, which.

they, them, their In most cases, a plural pronoun should agree in number with the antecedent: *The children love the books their uncle gave them. They/them/their* is acceptable as a singular and/or gender-neutral pronoun. You may also use a singular *they* when you must shield an anonymous source's gender and other wording is overly awkward: *The person feared for their own safety and spoke on condition of anonymity.*

time See Numbers section.

titles Generally, capitalize formal titles when they appear before a person's name, but lowercase titles if they are informal, appear without a person's name, follow a person's name or are set off before a name by commas. *President Biden; Councilmember Balducci; CEO Dow Constantine; Chair Sp,ers approved the motion.* Lowercase adjectives that designate the status of a title. If a title is long, place it after the person's name, or set it off with commas before the person's name. Examples: *former CEO Peter Rogoff.*

transit center A transit stop or station where several routes or lines meet. Capitalize the full name of transit centers: *the Bellevue Transit Center.* Lowercase transit center when the term stands alone (is not the proper name): *The transit center is near Northgate Shopping Center.* Avoid the acronym *TC* whenever possible.

transit operator On first reference, *transit operator* is the preferred term for people who operate buses or light rail trains. To avoid confusion with other types of operators, include the word transit on first reference. Bus driver or operator is acceptable to avoid redundancy. Always lowercase.

transit-oriented development A public and private development supporting transit use by emphasizing pedestrian and transit access, clustering development, and mixing land uses and activities. Abbreviate to *TOD* on second reference, but use sparingly.

transportation demand management Cooperative efforts by transit agencies, local government, and business to manage transportation demand and make public transportation more attractive. Methods include limiting parking, promoting flextime and building park-and-ride lots. Spell out on first reference. TDM is acceptable on second reference but use very sparingly.

Transportation Improvement Program A program of intermodal transportation projects, to implement over several years, growing out of the planning process and designed to improve transportation in a community. This program is required as a condition of locality receiving federal transit and highway grants. Spell out on first reference. TIP is acceptable on second reference.

trolley bus Two words. *Trolley coach* or *trolley* is acceptable in texts to avoid redundancy. Use the term to refer to a bus propelled by electrical power from two overhead wires.

TTY Abbreviation for telecommunications device for the deaf and teletypewriter. Acceptable on first reference when used following a phone number. The following is a recommended format for stating a TTY telephone number: (888) 713-6030 TTY. Do not use *TDD*.

U

union names You can shorten formal names of unions to conventionally accepted names: Change: United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America to: United Auto Workers union. Capitalize short-form names except for union. Capitalize *union* when it is part of the formal name: *Amalgamated Transit Union*.

University District Spell out and capitalize on first reference for the neighborhood. On later references, you may use *U District*.

University of Washington Spell out and capitalize on first reference. Use *UW* (all caps, no periods) or *the university* (lowercase) on second reference. Use the same convention when referring to the University of Washington, Tacoma. Use *UW Tacoma* on second reference.

US vs. U.S. Use *US* without periods in headlines and subheads, including online (because it saves space), and *U.S.* with periods within texts. When used in an infographic, if space permits, use periods.

W

-ward, -wards Virtually none of the following directional words ending with this suffix end with an s: *Toward, backward, forward, downward, upward, onward, outward, inward, southward..*

well Hyphenate as part of a compound modifier: *She is a well-dressed woman. He is well-fed*.

- **well-being** Hyphenate *well-* modifiers.
- **well-informed** Hyphenate.

-wide No hyphen. Some examples: *citywide, nationwide, continentwide, statewide, countrywide, worldwide, industrywide*.

workforce One word, joining *workbook, workday, workhorse, workout, workplace, workstation, and workweek.*

Y

years Use numerals without commas: *In 2003 ...* Use an *s* and no apostrophe to show spans of decades or centuries but use an apostrophe at the start of the year when omitting the first two numerals: *1990s, 1900s, '68, '60s*. Years are the one exception to the rule against beginning a sentence with numerals: *1994 was one of his best years*. See dates.

WORD BANK

- **backward** Not backwards.**beside, besides** Often confused. Beside means at the side of or next to. Besides means also, in addition to or “other than." See in addition to.
- **biannual, biennial** Biannual means twice a year and is a synonym for the word semiannual. Biennial means every two years.
- **bus stop** Two words.
- **bus-on-shoulder operations** Hyphenate.
- **busway** Exclusive right-of-way for buses only. One word.
- **carpool** One word. You may use as a noun, verb, or adjective: *The neighbors formed a carpool to save time and money. They carpooled to work to save time and money. She requested some carpool information*.
- **construct** (verb) Use “build” instead
- **corridor** A long, relatively narrow area within a region that follows a general directional flow. Do not capitalize when referring to geographic location of corridors unless used in the formal title of a report: *north corridor, south corridor*.
- **cut-and-cover** A method of tunnel or tunnel station construction involving digging or “cutting” a trench along a route and “covering” it with a lid to form the tunnel or station. *Using the cut-and-cover construction method was less expensive than tunneling.*
- **decision-maker** *decision-maker, decision-making* (two words, hyphenated) but *policymakers*.
- **farebox** One word.
- **ferry, ferries, ferryboat** Ferry is preferable and acceptable as both a noun and a verb. Plural is ferries.
- **fieldwork** One word.
- **first-ever** This should be hyphenated, though *first* should suffice.
- **first-come, first-served** Not first come, first serve. As a compound modifier it’s hyphenated: *first-come, first-served basis*.
- **fixed guideway** A system of vehicles that can operate only on its own guideway built for that purpose. Avoid the term when possible in favor of simpler alternatives.
- **fixed route** Service provided on a repetitive, fixed-schedule basis along a specific route with vehicles stopping to pick up and deliver passengers to specific locations; each trip on a fixed route serves the same origins and destinations, unlike demand responsive transit and taxicabs.

- **flier vs. flyer** Only use “flyer” in all cases.
- **formally vs. formerly** Formally means in accordance with the rules of convention or etiquette, or officially: *He was formally attired. The mayor will formally open the new light rail station.* Formerly means in the past; in earlier times: *The building formerly housed their accounting offices. The artist formerly known as Prince.*
- **freeway station** A bus stop located on an off ramp of a freeway. Freeway station (or stop) is preferred. To avoid reader confusion, do not use *Flyer stop*.
- **front line** (n.) **front-line** (adj.)
- **grade crossing** The intersection of a railroad track or rail line with a surface street or road. Use space.
- **groundbreaking** No space.
- **hand-washing** Use hyphen if used as an adjective.
- **headway** Time between vehicles moving in the same direction on a particular route. Generally, avoid in favor of plain talk, so *four-minute headways* becomes *trains every four minutes*.
- **heavy rail** Avoid. See light rail.
- **high-capacity transit** A transit system that uses rail or special busways. See light rail.
- **high-occupancy vehicle** Buses, carpools and vanpools are high-occupancy vehicles. They can travel in high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes.
- **high-occupancy vehicle lane** Spell out on first reference. *HOV lane* is acceptable on second reference. *Bus and carpool lane* is also acceptable. Avoid referring to this as the diamond lane.
- **high-speed rail** Don’t use this term.
- **kitty-corner** Sound Transit prefers *diagonal to.*
- **modal split**, **mode split** Avoid using this term in information intended for a general audience.
- **pandemic** An epidemic that has spread worldwide. Avoid the redundant term “global pandemic.”
- **passengers** Refer to those who use our services as *passengers*, not *customers*, *patrons* or *riders*.
- **passenger drop-off area** Usually a turn-around point where people drop off or pick up transit riders. Do not use the term “kiss-and-ride.”
- **pickup, drop-off** pickup (n. and adj.), but drop-off (n.) hyphenated or drop off (v.)

- **policymaker** One word, not hyphenated.
- **preplanned** Per Associated Press and Webster's, no hyphen.
- **railcar** A generic term for a railway vehicle. Use when referring to Sounder railcars. For Link, use cars or vehicles.
- **railroad** Capitalize when part of a name: *Union Pacific Railroad*. Lowercase when using *railroad* alone.
- **redeploy** One word, no hyphen.
- **reverse commuting** Movement in a direction opposite the main flow of traffic, such as from the central city to a suburb during morning rush hour.
- **ride-hailing** Ride-hailing services such as Uber and Lyft let people use smartphone apps to book and pay for a private car service or, in some cases, a taxi.
- **ride-sharing** Ride-sharing refers to app-based services that let people book a shared shuttle. Zipcar, ReachNow, Car2Go and similar companies are short-term car rental services.
- **route** The horizontal path taken by a rail line or bus (i.e., what streets or alignment it runs along). Use instead of alignment.
- **scoping notice** Lowercase.
- **shared-ride** See rideshare, ridesharing.
- **sign-up** (n and adj.) sign up (v.)
- **station area** The neighborhood immediately surrounding a bus or rail station.
- **ticket vending machine** Use the simpler *ticket machine* when possible. Do not use TVM.
- **time frame** Two words. A particular time frame: *Provide at least a 24-hour notice*. *Please provide at least 24 hours' notice*.
- **timeline** One word.
- **timesaving** One word.
- **toward** Not towards, which is not a word in American English.
- **trackbed** One word. Try using track foundation instead.
- **traveling, traveled** Not travelling or travelled, as is common in British English. Most American plurals default toward single consonants.

- **via** Means “by way of,” not “by means of.” Use via (or, simpler, use through) to show the direction of a journey: *The route goes from Seattle to Southcenter via Rainier Beach.* Don’t use via to show the means by which someone makes a journey: He made the trip via bus. Say: *He made the trip by bus.* Use VIA in all caps when referring to shuttle service to Link stations in the Rainier Valley.
- **year-end** Hyphenate both the noun and adjective.
- **yearlong** One word.
- **year-round** Hyphenate.

Style guide resources

For additional information, please consult the following resources:

- The Associated Press Stylebook.
- King County's Editorial Style Manual: https://www.kingcounty.gov/help/editorial-style-guide.aspx
- Webster's New World Dictionary.

- Contact Kate Dieda (kate.dieda@soundtransit.org) if you have any questions.