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Welcome

If your role is to connect with the public and encourage engagement around our project development process, this guide is for you.

We’re working to fulfill our mission to connect more people to more places. These guidelines outline our System Expansion communication style strategy and the most effective ways of expressing it.

For more resources including System Expansion style guide assets and templates, contact:

STbrand@soundtransit.org
Style strategy

As we expand our Link, Sounder, ST Express and Stride Bus Rapid Transit services into new areas, it’s important that we introduce ourselves in the right way. After all, we are affecting people’s lives albeit for a better, brighter future. So as we invite our new neighbors to help shape their future routes, let’s do so in a positive, competent and welcoming way. This guide will show you how to do that with engaging visuals and clear communication.

For those involved in the planning, designing, and construction phase of the expansion process, we’ve created an easy-to-navigate and fluid customer experience journey to ensure our visuals and voice are consistent across all our customer touchpoints.
There are several ways we connect with our customers and they connect with us. We call these customer touchpoints and each of them serve a distinct purpose. Combined, they create an easy and fluid customer experience. In this guide, we’ll focus on what we’d consider our major customer touchpoints and how an audience interacts with them at various phases.

**Alert**

Notifications and advertisements — digital and physical — with the sole purpose of clearly calling attention to an emerging outreach effort.

**Involve**

Built to inform and educate our customers, these touchpoints are rich with content and provide channels and tools to obtain community feedback.

**Update**

To support audience retention, we stay in constant communication via email marketing throughout all phases of project development. We’re also committed to maintaining fresh and current information on all project websites and channels.
**Good news!**
We’re coming to your neighborhood.

I love good news.

**Link light rail extensions**

//

West Seattle and Ballard

Comment online or at an upcoming open house:

West Seattle // Tuesday, Feb. 13 // 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Alki Masonic Center, 4736 40th Ave. S.W.

Ballard // Thursday, Feb. 15 // 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Leif Erikson Lodge, 2245 N.W. 57th St.

Downtown Seattle // Tuesday, Feb. 20 // 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Union Station, 401 S. Jackson St.

Help shape future light rail service

wsblink.participate.online

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**STYLE STRATEGY: CUSTOMER JOURNEY**

**Major touchpoints**

This guide covers our **12 major customer touchpoints**.

1) Digital and print ads
2) Direct mail
3) Social media (targeted)
4) Posters and flyers
5) In-vehicle notifications
6) Online open house or survey
7) Public meeting presentation
8) Public meeting displays
9) Public meeting leave behinds
10) Email marketing and updates
11) Project website(s)
12) Social media (passive)
Style expression

When presenting ourselves to the communities we’re impacting, all our products should have a consistent look, feel, and voice — in other words, a unified style expression. Ultimately, how we express ourselves will not only help our customers feel comfortable and confident as we move ahead, but will give them a glimpse into a future that promises a better quality of life.

These elements combined make up our style expression:

Voice + Tone
Colors
Typography
Graphic assets
Photography
These elements combined make up our style expression:

**Voice + Tone**
- I love good news!

**Colors**
- Wave Blue
- Dark Teal
- Coral

**Typography**
- OMF East

**Graphic assets**

**Photography**
Hello. We’re Sound Transit.

Think of us as your smart, likable, sometimes witty friend that you can count on to give you straightforward information and trusted advice in friendly, helpful and positive ways.

Our Voice + Tone is:

- Positive
- Friendly
- Helpful
- Knowledgeable
- Empathetic
- Competent
- Genuine

These guidelines give you a few guardrails so that no matter what message you’re communicating, and to whom, it all should feel like it’s coming from the same place and with the same voice. They are by no means meant to be prescriptive, merely a compass that can help point you in the right direction.
Customer insights

People’s feelings and emotions change during each phase of project development. Knowing and understanding this will guide you in crafting messages that are helpful and empathetic.

**Plan**

Fear | Joy | Hope | Excitement

“How will it impact my life?” or “I’m excited and can’t wait for this new change.”

**Design**

Apprehension | Cautious Optimism | Positivity | Excitement

“I hope the guideway and stations look nice and fit in with the neighborhood.” or “These designs look good on paper. We’ll see how everything looks once it’s built.”

**Build**

Excitement | Dread | Anticipation

“I’m excited and can’t wait for this new service!” or “How will this construction impact me (noise, access, etc.)?”
When it comes to headlines, we want to make sure they reflect the positive, empathetic and competent nature of our voice. Tone may need to be adjusted to match a community’s general sentiment when it comes to our expansion efforts.

**Plan**

*Good things are coming your way*

**Design**

*Moving forward together*

**Build**

*We care about your neighborhood*
Say this:
Good things are coming your way. Help shape the future of light rail in your community at our upcoming project kick-off events and give us feedback on route and station location options: soundtransit.org/wsblink

Not this:
Join the discussion. During early scoping, Sound Transit is seeking public input on alternatives to improve high capacity transit.

Say this:
We want to hear from you. The Tacoma Trestle replacement is a big project, and your input is important. Join us for an open house and share your thoughts and ideas. Let's move this project forward together. RSVP at soundtransit.org/tacomatrestle

Not this:
Sound Transit wants to hear your thoughts on conceptual elements for the replacement of the Tacoma Trestle. Comments from the open house will help inform how the new trestle looks. Visit online at www.soundtransit.org/tacomatrestle.

Say this:
Thanks for your patience as our crews continue to prepare the south tunnel portal site. We know this may be disruptive, but please bear with us as we work as quickly, efficiently and safely as possible. Curious about what to expect when excavation begins and how it may impact you? Our Community Outreach staff is ready to answer your questions or meet with you in person: 206-703-1234

Not this:
Sound Transit's tunnel crews continue to prepare the south tunnel portal site. For more information about the excavation process, please contact Community Outreach staff at 206-703-1234.
Built from of our Service Line colors and some core colors adopted from the parent brand, our System Expansion palette contains compatible hues that when used together, create a visually pleasing experience.

**Service Line colors**

- **Red Line**
  - PMS: 179C
  - HEX: E63C2F
  - C: 14 M: 31 Y: 81 K: 0 R: 230 G: 80 B: 47

- **Blue Line**
  - PMS: 368C
  - HEX: 008FBE
  - C: 100 M: 24 Y: 18 K: 0 R: 0 G: 143 B: 190

- **Green Line**
  - PMS: 361C
  - HEX: 3FAE2A
  - C: 75 M: 2 Y: 100 K: 0 R: 63 G: 174 B: 42

- **Orange Line**
  - PMS: 144C
  - HEX: F3BB00
  - C: 2 M: 55 Y: 100 K: 0 R: 243 G: 139 B: 0

- **Purple Line**
  - PMS: 2592C
  - HEX: 9F28B5
  - C: 50 M: 89 Y: 8 K: 0 R: 159 G: 38 B: 181

**Everyday use palette**

- **Wave Blue**
  - PMS: 294C
  - HEX: 002E6D
  - C: 100 R: 0 M: 70 G: 46 Y: 5 B: 109 K: 40

- **Dark Teal**
  - PMS: 633C
  - HEX: 007297
  - C: 100 R: 0 M: 40 G: 114 Y: 29 B: 151 K: 3

- **Purple**
  - PMS: 50% 294C
  - HEX: 7F9686

- **Sounder**
  - PMS: 60% 632C
  - HEX: 66BDD1

- **Bus Rapid Transit**
  - PMS: 124C
  - HEX: EDAA00
  - C: 5 M: 35 Y: 100 K: 0 R: 237 G: 170 B: 0

- **Go Green**
  - PMS: 386C
  - HEX: 77BC1F
  - C: 58 M: 0 Y: 100 K: 0 R: 115 G: 188 B: 31

- **Highlight Yellow**
  - PMS: 1235C
  - HEX: FF8819

- **Sound Transit**
  - HEX: E63C2F
  - C: 14 M: 31 Y: 81 K: 0 R: 230 G: 80 B: 47

- **ST Express**
  - PMS: 60% 632C
  - HEX: 66BDD1
Words communicate, but so do typefaces. They offer up subtle visual cues to frame our messages, reinforce our identity, and complement our Voice + Tone which is positive, conversational and competent. Our System Expansion typeface families consist of Akzidenz Grotesk, Arial, Nunito Sans and Hind.

Moving forward together

Check out the latest designs for your future station and get project updates:

soundtransit.org/redmondlink

I-405 Bus Rapid Transit

Starting in 2024, I-405 BRT will connect communities along I-405 and SR 518 from Lynnwood to Burien.

Stay ahead of construction

We're committed to minimizing impacts

- Sign up for construction alerts
- Attend community events and project meetings

Get updates
Print, video and ads

Our core typeface, Akzidenz Grotesk, is the clean and clear complement to our full style expression. Use it for all print, video and environmental design-based outreach products as well as all advertisements.*

*Font licenses can be purchased through the [H. Berthold Typefoundry website](http://www.hberthold.com/).
Usage

**Are you keeping up with construction?**

**New service starts in 2022**

Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension will kick-off construction in fall of this year. When complete, light rail service will extend another 2.4 miles into downtown — connecting riders to more popular destinations, major medical facilities and schools.

**More project benefits**

- Seven new stations from Old City Hall to the Hilltop neighborhood.
- Expansion of the Operations and Maintenance Facility located on East 25th Street to accommodate storage of five new light rail vehicles.
- Station artwork by Tacoma native Kenji Stoll.

**Stay connected**

Our Community Outreach team is here to help:

- [htlink@soundtransit.org](mailto:htlink@soundtransit.org) or 206-903-0000
- More project details: [soundtransit.org/htlink](http://soundtransit.org/htlink)

- [soundtransit.org/subscribe](http://soundtransit.org/subscribe)
**Presentation and internal**

**Arial** is our universal, platform-independent typeface — available to all. A cousin to Akzidenz Grotesk, use this font when creating communication materials and templates in Word or PowerPoint format.

```
Arial Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

Arial Bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

Arial Bold Italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
10234567890
```
Usage

What’s next for ST Express?

**Looking ahead to 2025**

- Speed and reliability improvements in the South Sound.
- More connections with Link light rail and new *Stride* bus rapid transit service.
- New park-and-ride in north Sammamish connecting more east King County neighborhoods to regional transit.
- Bus-on-Shoulder program provides opportunities to bypass congestion.

[soundtransit.org/stxnext](soundtransit.org/stxnext)
Web-based products

Our web and digital properties call for a more friendly and open-source typographic solution. Also complementary to our core typeface, **Nunito Sans + Hind** together set the standard on our agency website and outreach microsites.*

*NBoth webfonts can be found, license-free, at [fonts.google.com](http://fonts.google.com).
Puyallup Station Improvements

Project highlights

We're working to improve access to Puyallup Station for pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers, including construction of a new garage (503 spaces), new surface parking (166 spaces), and pedestrian and bicycle improvements.

More parking spaces and better access for bikes and pedestrians will help you get to your train — and to where you’re going — faster.

Garage construction begins in 2019 and will ready to open in 2021. All access improvements will be completed by 2023.
A library of visual elements — each piece crafted to work together to tell our System Expansion story.
Color plays an important role in the transportation services we provide. Operationally, color is used as an identity system — Red Line to Northgate, Green Line to Federal Way, etc. Our Service Line lockups act as a visual anchor for each System Expansion project package.

Anatomy of a Service Line lockup

Considerations

- Mode icon
- Wave Blue background
- Primary line color (project-specific)
- Secondary line color set (project-specific)
- Cropped or not? (media-specific)
- Double or single line color? (project-specific)
Usage

Do this:

Correct usage of mode icons, primary and secondary line colors, crop and background color.

Don’t do this:

Too few secondary lines and primary line is off-center with mode icon.

Incorrect mode icon, color treatment and spacing between lines.

Improper use of background colors.

STYLE EXPRESSION: GRAPHIC ASSETS — SERVICE LINES
To familiarize our riders with future service conventions, we introduce Service Line and mode icon colors early when a project is still in the planning, design and construction phases.
Service Lines are project and location-specific, part of our identity, and can act as a visual tool to guide the eye to important messaging.
Our icons are universal. They share ideas that bypass language and literacy barriers and act as a visual language we use to help our riders navigate our transit system. Our System Expansion icons are a branch of our larger icon family — simple, elegant shapes that successfully depict complex concepts and ideas.

*Above is a sample of the System Expansion icon library. Refer to the full library for all available options.
One of our most frequently used assets, the project timeline answers two important questions; “Where are we currently in project development?” and “When does service start?” It’s designed to adjust to less or more detail, depending on the communication need.*

*Timelines will vary based on project information and future service mode. Intended for non-web use.
Minor modifications:
- Drop “Voter approval” section dependent on project status, adjust placement of star icon, add subtext like “Scheduled,” and expand one or more drawers to provide adequate detail.

Major modifications:
- Simplify graphic elements to represent complex project activities, overlapping timelines and/or multiple agencies.

Background color:
- May appear on either white or Wave Blue backgrounds. Adjust elements according to background color and to maximize legibility. Example to the left reflects Wave Blue background standards.

Sound Transit | System Expansion style guide | v1.0 | July 2019
We rely on our evergreen assets to create a visual thread of consistency; acting as anchors in all of our templates throughout every phase of a project. They become familiar, recognizable and associated with active projects and future service.
Dynamic assets

Project development starts with a representative line on a map and progresses to a final route and fully conceived station designs. As projects take shape, our primary imagery dynamically adjusts to reflect that. Dynamic assets are paired with Evergreen assets to create the most relevant and consistent experience.

**Where is it going?** In the PNW, our unique topography includes large bodies of water, visually interesting coastlines and various inlets and rivers. This distinctive environment is a big part of our identity and makes it easy to identify our communities by the water that surrounds them. Our Geotastic approach uses deep-blue hued aerial images and bold route lines to represent project locations in early planning.

**What will it look like?** As a project moves to design, we shift to using imagery that inspires; a glimpse into what a future station may look like. These photo simulations are views from a platform with a train set in the background, and a focus on riders enjoying new stations and service. General in nature, Simspirational images depict the common architectural elements and features our stations share.

**Will I enjoy the ride?** Our neighbors in project corridors are impacted daily by construction. We help ease frustrations and reconnect them with their future through location-specific illustrations centered around lifestyle. Connexcellent imagery speaks to the individual, the ridership experience just over the horizon and conveys an improved quality of life.
Before service starts, years of planning, designing and building have gone in to our projects. Our photography tells the story of the pre-operational journey; late-night public meetings, sky-high scaffolding and the shine of finishing touches. Carefully-curated photos reflect our promise to invite engagement, provide stations and shelters designed to meet the highest standards and deliver a stress-free commute.
Inspire engagement

In the planning and design phases, we encourage and welcome public involvement. Our neighbors, and future riders, help shape our transit system with their insights on where a route should go and what their future stations should look like. Photos of our public meetings are light and bright and capture authentic moments.

*Project phases: Plan and Design*

**Do this:**

Images of people working together, showing collaboration and engagement.

**Don’t do this:**

Overly busy; anything that looks staged or contrived; people and/or meeting attendees who look angry or frustrated.

Small work groups and interactions between ST staff and meeting attendees; people in the foreground with displays in the background for context; interesting perspectives.
Connect with community

Often at the onset of a new project, it’s our job to introduce ourselves to a new community or neighborhood in a welcoming and gracious manner. Having a deep understanding of each unique area, and its local population, will help us better reflect the community, and the people who live there, in our photography.  

*Project phases: Plan and Build*

**Do this:**

Capture people and neighborhoods anticipating future service; reflect diversity in both environment and people; tell an interesting story of local experiences with people + product shots.

**Don’t do this:**

Overly general and lacking an interesting perspective or subject; photos without people.
We get to plan, design and build engineering marvels; tunnels that travel underwater, tracks on floating bridges, and sweeping overpasses connecting our service to the greater region. Our awe-inspiring construction photos capture the massive scale of our projects, the skilled workers who build them and provide a snapshot of build progress.

*Project phases: *Build*

**Do this:**

- Illustrate project scale with people next to structures and equipment; represent diversity and show the women and men who build our service; demonstrate safety requirements; compelling perspectives.

- *Do share compelling construction images on social media to show progress.*

**Don’t do this:**

- Overly cluttered images with too much debris or equipment; photos that lack a focal point or strong subject.

- *Do not use construction photos to advertise a public outreach event or as hero images on high-level project collateral.*
Define the impact

Our neighbors located next and near to our active construction sites are impacted by our construction activity the most. They may experience feelings of anxiety and uncertainty about the forthcoming construction like noise, dust and limited access. To ease their anxiety, we show them what to expect. Examples include photos of excavation, utility work, track work, paving and street improvements.  

Project phases: Build*

Do this:

Generic images that don’t describe a specific construction activity; photos that lack a focal point or strong subject.

Don’t do this:

Descriptive images inside folios that inform and educate those impacted by construction; represent diversity and show the women and men who build our service; demonstrate safety requirements.

*Do not use construction photos to advertise a public outreach event or as hero images on high-level project collateral.
Ride into the future

Transit projects take years to build and come with a myriad of short- and long-term inconveniences. For our neighbors, it can be easy to lose sight of the big picture and the benefits that future service and an expanded transit system can bring. So, we do our best to remind them of what’s to come — a painless and affordable commute to work or play.

Project phases: Plan, Design and Build

Do this:

Photos focused on happy and relaxed riders both inside and next to vehicles; capture speed, size and cleanliness of our vehicles; Platform images of riders using the system with a visible vehicle and ST Wave in the background.

Don't do this:

Photos with too many subjects and lacking a focal point; anything dark or gloomy; frustrated riders or no riders at all.
Project templates

To provide context and demonstrate how to apply these guidelines and assets, the following pages contain examples of templates for each of the three phases of project development. Take note of the consistent visual and voice flowing from one major touchpoint to another.

For access to these templates and more System Expansion style guide assets, contact:

✉️ STbrand@soundtransit.org
Good news! We’re coming to your neighborhood.

Link Extensions
West Seattle and Ballard

Lake Union
Elliott Bay
West Seattle Bridge
Denny Way
Yesler Way
SW Alaska St
W Dravus St
15th Ave W
Elliott Ave W
Madison St
NW Market St
Ballard to downtown Seattle
West Seattle to downtown Seattle

2030
2035
Salmon Bay Crossing (MOVABLE BRIDGE)
Duwamish Waterway Crossing (FIXED STRUCTURE)

Stadium SODO
Delridge Avalon
Alaska Junction
South Lake Union
Int’l District/Chinatown
Westlake Denny
Midtown Seattle
Seattle Center
Smith Cove Interbay
Ballard (2035)

Elevated
New downtown tunnel
Elevated
Surface

To Everett (2036)
To Tacoma Dome (2030)
To Lynnwood/Redmond (2024)

West Seattle extension
4.7 miles of light rail service from downtown Seattle to West Seattle’s Alaska Junction neighborhood.
5 light rail stations (3 new and 2 expanded) between the Stadium area and Alaska Junction.
Open for service in 2030.

Ballard extension
7.1 miles of light rail service from downtown Seattle to Ballard’s Market Street area, including a new downtown Seattle rail-only tunnel.
9 light rail stations (7 new and 2 expanded) between International District/Chinatown and Market Street.
Open for service in 2035.

Stay informed
Contact our Community Outreach team at 206-903-7229 or wsblink@soundtransit.org.
Learn about our project: soundtransit.org/wsblink.

Good things are coming your way
Help shape future light rail service

Comment online or at an upcoming open house:
wsblink-participate.online

West Seattle // Tuesday, Feb. 12 // 6:30-8:30 p.m.
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Union Station, 401 S. Jackson St.

Sound Transit plans is connecting more people to more places.

Sound Transit  |  System Expansion style guide  |  v1.0  |  July 2019

This is when a project is in the early stages of planning and alternatives development. It’s our first opportunity to introduce our starting point for the project route and, in some cases, Sound Transit as a transit agency.
This is when our projects reach the various phases of design, the service route has been established and we shift focus to future stations.
This is when everything starts to take shape and construction impacts are real. In this phase, we ease audience frustrations by emphasizing the benefits of the future ridership experience and with reassurance that we are here to help.

Construction begins
The Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension will open in 2022. Tacoma Link will extend 2.4 miles from the Theater District to the Stadium District, Tacoma General Hospital and the Hilltop neighborhood, ending near St. Joseph Medical Center.

Construction activities will include: up to 100-year-old sewer and utility line repair; adding 100-year-old sewer and utility line replacement; adding curb ramps at most intersections; adding traffic signals at 7th/Commerce and 18th/MLK, King, and 16th/MLK; and installing artwork along the alignment.

Sound Transit will also expand its Operations and Maintenance Facility on East 25th Street to hold more light rail vehicles.

Construction will include: *Water main, sanitary and storm sewer upgrades and new water service connections. **Operations and Maintenance Facility, stations, artwork, tracks, traction power substations, contact system poles, signalized intersections and repaved roadway.

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For more information about this style guide and to access assets and templates, contact:

✉️ STbrand@soundtransit.org