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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
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 transit experience, let's do so in a positive, competent and welcoming way. This guide will show you how to do that by using engaging visuals and clear communication.

For those supporting the planning, design, and construction phases of System Expansion, 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.
Customer journey

There are several ways we connect with our customers and they connect with us. We call these customer touchpoints and each serve a distinct purpose. Working together, 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 print — with the sole purpose of clearly calling attention to a new engagement effort.

**Involve**

Built to inform and educate our customers, these touchpoints are content-rich and provide channels and tools to efficiently collect 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 relevant information on all project websites and channels.
STYLE STRATEGY: CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Major touchpoints

This guide covers our 12 major customer touchpoints.

Alert

1) Digital and print ads
2) Direct mail
3) Social media (paid)
4) Posters and flyers
5) In-vehicle notifications

Involve

6) Online open house or survey
7) Public meeting presentation
8) Public meeting displays
9) Public meeting leave beind

Update

10) Email marketing and updates
11) Project website(s)
12) Social media (organic)
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 | Construct

**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**

*More transit is on the way*

**Design**

*Your future station is taking shape*

**Build**

*We care about your neighborhood*
Say this:

More light rail is on the way. Give us your feedback on the route and station locations we’re currently studying in your area. Go online or join us at an open house in your neighborhood: 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 on certain design elements. 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 Engagement 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.
## Colors

### STYLE EXPRESSION

#### ACTION PINK
- PMS 255 C
- CMYK 5/96/0/0
- RGB 229/26/146
- HEX E5078E
- CSS 'BrandPink'
- CMYK 5/96/0/0
- RGB 229/26/146
- HEX E5078E

#### DARK CHARCOAL
- CMYK 0/0/0/65
- RGB 0/1/15/1
- HEX 333333

#### RAILWAY GRAY
- CMYK 0/0/0/65
- RGB 0/1/15/1
- HEX 333333

#### WAVE BLUE
- CMYK 0/46/109/0
- RGB 0/46/109
- HEX 002E6D

#### DARK TEAL
- CMYK 0/145/179/0
- RGB 0/145/179
- HEX 0091B3

#### HI-LITE YELLOW
- CMYK 0/188/0/0
- RGB 255/184/25
- HEX FFB819

#### CONSTRUCTION ORANGE
- CMYK 229/26/146
- RGB 229/26/146
- HEX E5078E

#### LAND GRAY
- CMYK 0/0/0/65
- RGB 0/1/15/1
- HEX 333333

#### ROADWAY GRAY
- CMYK 0/0/0/65
- RGB 0/1/15/1
- HEX 333333

### Sound Transit, online surveys and other agency microsites

#### ALERT GREEN
- CMYK 52/168/83
- RGB 52/168/83
- HEX 34A853

#### ALERT RED
- CMYK 216/78/52
- RGB 216/78/52
- HEX D84E34

#### SERVICE GRAY
- CMYK 0/0/0/65
- RGB 0/1/15/1
- HEX AAAAAA

#### WATER BLUE
- CMYK 0/145/179/0
- RGB 0/145/179
- HEX 0091B3

#### SERVICE GRAY
- CMYK 0/0/0/65
- RGB 0/1/15/1
- HEX 333333

### Service lines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Link 1 Line</th>
<th>Link 2 Line</th>
<th>Link 3 Line</th>
<th>Link 4 Line</th>
<th>Link T Line</th>
<th>STRIDE S1, 2, 3 Line</th>
<th>Sounder N &amp; S Line</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PMS 361 C</td>
<td>PMS 299 C</td>
<td>PMS 299 C</td>
<td>PMS 2582 C</td>
<td>PMS 144 C</td>
<td>PMS 124 C</td>
<td>PMS 644 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMYK 76/4/0/0/0</td>
<td>CMYK 81/18/0/0/0</td>
<td>CMYK 6/85/0/0/0</td>
<td>CMYK 2/55/100/0</td>
<td>CMYK 7/68/0/0/0</td>
<td>CMYK 2/55/100/0</td>
<td>CMYK 39/20/7/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGB 61/174/43</td>
<td>RGB 61/174/43</td>
<td>RGB 237/64/169</td>
<td>RGB 177/79/197</td>
<td>RGB 235/169/0</td>
<td>RGB 235/169/0</td>
<td>RGB 154/182/0/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEX 3DAE2B</td>
<td>HEX DA02D</td>
<td>HEX ED40A8</td>
<td>HEX B14FC5</td>
<td>HEX 038800</td>
<td>HEX EBA900</td>
<td>HEX 9ABED3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sound Transit.org, online surveys and other agency microsites

#### ALERT GREEN
- CMYK 52/168/83
- RGB 52/168/83
- HEX 34A853

#### ALERT RED
- CMYK 216/78/52
- RGB 216/78/52
- HEX D84E34

#### SERVICE GRAY
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</table>
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.

### The train arrives in 2024

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

[soundtransit.org/redmondlink](soundtransit.org/redmondlink)

### Stay ahead of construction

*We’re committed to minimizing impacts*

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

Starting in 2024, the Stride S1 and S2 lines will connect communities along I-405 and SR 518 from Lynnwood to Burien.
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 engagement products as well as all advertisements.*

---

*Font licenses can be purchased through the [H. Berthold Typefoundry website](https://www.berthold.com).*
Are you keeping up with construction?

New service starts in 2022

Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension construction is in full swing. When complete, light rail service will extend another 2.4 miles into downtown — connecting passengers 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 Engagement team is here to help:

htlink@soundtransit.org or 206-903-0000

Learn about the project and subscribe to email updates:

soundtransit.org/htlink
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.
What’s next for ST Express?

More connections, speed and reliability

- 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
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 engagement microsites.*

*Both webfonts can be found, license-free, at [fonts.google.com](http://fonts.google.com).*
Usage

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 2020 and will ready to open in 2022. 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 a key part of the identity system — specific line colors represent specific service routes and modes. Our Service Line lockups act as a visual anchor for each System Expansion project package.

**Anatomy of a Service Line lockup**

- Mode icon
- Primary line color (project-specific)
- Secondary line color set (project-specific)
- Wave Blue background

**Considerations**

- Cropped or not? (product-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.
To familiarize our passengers 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-specific, part of our identity, and can act as a visual tool to guide the eye to important messaging — in color or black and white.
Iconography

Our icons are universal. They share ideas that bypass language and literacy barriers and act as a visual language we use to help our passengers 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 in project development?” and “When does service start?” It’s designed to adjust for 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:

- Final route and station designs
- Procure and commission station and public art
- Obtain land use and construction permits

Major modifications:

- Drop “Voter approval” section when appropriate, adjust placement of star icon, add subtext like “Scheduled,” expand one or more drawers to provide adequate detail, add star pointer icon to emphasize current activity.

Background color:

- May appear on Wave Blue (primary) or white backgrounds. Adjust elements according to background color and to maximize legibility. Example to the left reflects Wave Blue background standards.
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, too. 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 regional identity and makes it easy to identify our communities by the water surrounding them. Our visual 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 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 passengers enjoying new stations and service. General in nature, these station 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 see a brighter future through location-specific illustrations centered around lifestyle. This imagery speaks to the individual, the passenger experience just over the horizon and conveys an improved quality of life.
“Where is it going?”
Aerial map and route
- Corridor-specific geography
- Deep-blue hued aerial imagery
- Bold, project-specific service lines and icons

“What will it look like?”
General station illustration
- Photo simulations
- Views from platforms
- Vehicle in background
- Focus on passengers enjoying stations and service
- Common architectural elements and features

“Will I enjoy the ride?”
Site-specific station illustration
- Photo simulations
- Centered around location and lifestyle
- Vehicle in background
- Focus on passengers enjoying service
- Neighborhood-specific architecture and landmarks

Examples
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.

Looking for photos? Go to:

soundtransit.photoshelter.com
In the planning and design phases, we encourage and welcome public involvement. Our neighbors, and future passengers, 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:**

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

*soundtransit.photoshelter.com*

**Don’t do this:**

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

[link]

Overly general and lacking an interesting perspective or subject; photos without people.

[link]
Build a legacy

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 engagement event or as hero images on high-level project collateral.
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:**

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

**Don’t do this:**

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

*Do not use construction photos to advertise a public engagement 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 passengers both inside and next to vehicles; capture speed, size and cleanliness of our vehicles; Platform images of passengers 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 passengers or no passengers 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
More light rail is on the way

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.

West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions Planning phase
Alternatives development

Planning phase
Alternatives development

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.

Contact us
Contact our Community Outreach team at 206-903-7229 or wsblink@soundtransit.org.

Share your feedback on route options
wsblink.participate.online

Comment online or at an upcoming open house:
West Seattle  |  Wednesday, Feb. 27  |  6-8:30 p.m. *
Alki Masonic Center, 4736 40th Ave. SW, Seattle, WA 98116
Ballard/Interbay  |  Thursday, Feb. 28  |  6-8:30 p.m. *
Ballard High School, Commons, 1418 NW 65th St., Seattle, WA 98117
Downtown  |  Thursday, March 7  |  5-7:30 p.m. *
Union Station, 401 S Jackson St., Seattle, WA 98104

* Presentation begins 30 minutes after start time.
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 passenger experience and with reassurance that we are here to help.
For more information about this style guide and for assets and templates, contact:

✉️ STbrand@soundtransit.org