WSDOT

FEBRUARY 2022

COMMUNICATIONS MANUAL

M 3030

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 5

CHAPTER 6

CHAPTER 7

CHAPTER 8

CHAPTER 9

CHAPTER 10

CHAPTER 1
COMMUNICATION PHILOSOPHY

WSDOT communications is an integral piece of our agency's work and how we accomplish our mission to provide and support safe, reliable and cost-effective transportation options to improve livable communities and economic vitality for people and businesses.

Several foundational elements drive our ability to communicate clearly and effectively with the people we work with including:

- **Everyone is a communicator** – every employee is a communicator and contributor to the communities in which they work and live. Internal communications are important to keep employees informed on what we are doing and where we are going as an agency because employees are often asked by friends and family about what they do and who they work for.

- **Engage early, often** – relationships and how we engage people are important. Our efforts should be inclusive and our work should reflect engagement wherever possible. We cannot manage the system, modes and programs we operate in a silo and successfully meet the needs of those we serve.

- **Be accountable, transparent** – we can't avoid bad headlines, but we can manage them. A solid media strategy, a communications plan based on transparency and accountability and being the first, best source of information are keys to managing tough issues and minimizing damage to the public's perception of our work. It's better to be a big story for a few days than a constant trickle of stories for a few months.

- **Use all the tools** – as technology and ways people consume information evolve, communicators use a number of traditional and digital tools to inform and engage the public. As you develop a communications strategy, you should consider all tools – traditional and new – to determine how to best reach your desired audience.

- **No surprises, clearly state your intent** – our work is not possible without working with others, and the environment in which we work often changes. It's important to engage partners and stakeholders – internal and external to the agency – and build trust. Make sure your intentions are clear and transparent and keep people informed so there are no surprises. What you say and do matters and impacts the quality of relationships and public perception of the work we do.

- **A consistent brand is important** – consistency in how we communicate, the tools we use, the messages we deliver and the visual appeal of the products we create is critical to the OneDOT brand. Our brand is how people visually identify our agency and in turn generates an emotional reaction from the residents we serve.

The Communications Manual is an important resource that directs communicators and other agency staff to useful tools and resources that build and maintain the foundational elements of our agency communications program. It will evolve as our work, tools and the environment in which we operate changes and should be considered a living document.

What is the WSDOT brand?

A brand is what distinguishes our agency, our services, programs and projects from any other organization. It affects what people think about WSDOT when they see the agency's name or logo – whether that perception is good or bad. Statewide consistency in how we communicate, the messages we deliver and the communication products we create help to reinforce the WSDOT brand.

Please contact WSDOT communications staff members for updates to standards and information.

Communications Team - Working with you for success

WSDOT's professional communications team crosses the state. Representatives are available in each of its six regions and for many of the agency's divisions, major programs and projects.

What does WSDOT's communications team do?

- Proactive, responsive media relations
- Issue management
- Crisis communications
- Speech and presentation development
- Media and speaker training
- Social media engagement and monitoring
- Key message development
- Assistance with communication and event planning
- Edit review for releases, reports, presentations and other publications
- Serves as a clearinghouse for customer questions, comments and complaints

Deliver your message using the right communication tools

Your communications professionals can help you develop communication strategies and suggest tools to deliver your message. Tools might include:

- Traditional news release
- Social media – Facebook, Twitter, Blog, Periscope, YouTube
- Folio or other printed material
- Fact sheet
- Email or GovDelivery message
- Freight alert
- Intranet (employee) news article
- Newsletter
- PowerPoint presentation to professional association or community group
- Survey

How do I work with communications staff?

Start your conversation with communications staff as soon as possible. If your project requires public engagement, or is controversial, highly visible, unique, politically charged or will affect travelers significantly, then contact your communications office in the early stages of planning. They can work with you to determine the best communication strategies and tools to use, and work with you to develop an action plan.

Working with the WSDOT Editing team

A team of WSDOT's professional communicators share the duty of editing agency news releases to ensure consistency in agency style and messaging. All news releases and media advisories must have review and approval by the WSDOT Editing team prior to being distributed. (If you are not a member of the communications team, work through your region's or program's communications staff.)

Follow these steps to ensure a smooth editing process:

What do I need to do first?

- Complete all program/region/project team reviews and edits; drafts should be as near to final as possible.
- Send in a clean copy of the release, using the appropriate news release template, with all previous edits "accepted." When editors receive content that is marked up, it becomes difficult to read and know what content should be edited. In addition, in a marked up version, typos and spacing issues can easily be missed.

What is the turnaround time?

- Plan for a minimum 24-hour turnaround for editing. Editing team members all have their regular duties, in addition to editing, and this allows them to better manage their workload.
- If you know you will have an urgent release that will come in without much lead time, give the editor a heads up

so that they can adjust their schedule to be available, or help arrange for another editor to review, if needed.

- Breaking news: When emergencies or unexpected events occur and your release needs an immediate review, call the editor to ensure they've received the release and are available. Editors keep a close watch on the news in-box during their editing shifts, but aren't always at their desk throughout the entire day. If you can't reach the editor, contact the Headquarters Communications Office (360-705-7075) for assistance or call another editor to arrange for emergency cover.

- Releases that include a quote from the Secretary's Office or the Governor's Office require additional time for review and approval, so plan accordingly. Contact the communication director or deputy communication director as soon as possible for assistance in getting quote approval. The Secretary's review for quote approval will occur after the release has been approved through the news release edit process.

Where do I send my release?

- Releases are sent to the Communications NewsDraft email inbox (newsdraft@wsdot.wa.gov); editors are announced at the beginning of each week, and copying the editor directly is advised.

- You will continue to work with the same editor to finalize your release, even if a new weekly editor is assigned for the current week. We do this because we recognize that each editor has a different perspective, and in this way, we avoid "editing the edits."

What happens in the editing process?

An editor will review your release and send it back with one of these actions noted:

- **Approved to send:** There are no changes to your release and you are approved to distribute.

- **Approved with edits:** If you accept the edits, you are approved to send the release. Editors are always open to discussing with you any questions, concerns or disagreements you might have with the proposed edit changes.

- **Pending edits:** You may need to add, clarify or rewrite information, then send the release back for a second review; if you need to have a second internal review with your team, do this before sending it back for another edit review.

- **Needs rewrite**: This is an indication that there are significant problems with your release; the editor will discuss the issues with you and offer some potential options or solutions.

Working with Graphic Communications

Working with WSDOT's Graphic Communications team (graphics@wsdot.wa.gov) will ensure your documents meet agency branding and standards. Staff can also help you explore creative solutions and alternate ways to produce publications that save the agency time and money, so it's important to involve them early in the planning process.

Working with Web Communications

WSDOT Web Communications creates, maintains and enhances a number of tools vital to our agency's communication efforts that also impact the public's perception of our agency overall.

We lead with the web. WSDOT's web generates 60.5 million customer sessions per year; that's roughly 165,000 per day. Our agency website is the foundation to our communication efforts as it is the most heavily trafficked tool.

What does the Web Communications Team do?

- Webpage guidance and development
- Web usability guidelines
- Web analytics
- Social media creation and monitoring
- Technical assistance for webpage creators and users
- App development

Working with the HQ Customer Service Office

WSDOT HQ Customer Service serves as a clearinghouse for inquiries. Staff respond to inquiries from the public and WSDOT employees through email, as well as by telephone, and refer questions to the many subject experts within the agency. If you receive email from a member of the public and don't know who would be the best staff to respond, send the email to HQ Customer Service at hqcustomerservice@wsdot.wa.gov. We will make sure the email is sent to the appropriate subject expert.

If you receive an email directly from a member of the public and respond, you are not required to send a copy of that response to HQ Customer Service.

CHAPTER 2
COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

Communication and community engagement planning takes time and effort; the more time you spend up front on your plan, the more effective you will be in reaching your goal. As soon as your organization or project team starts planning objectives and activities, you should also begin planning ways to communicate them.

What is a communication plan?

A communication plan can be part of a community engagement plan, or it can be a stand-alone document, depending on the size, scope and complexity of your project.

- A communication plan is a living document that provides a framework and organization for actions that help you reach your communication goals. It is meant to be fluid and can expand and contract as changes in your project or program occur.

- The communication plan describes what you are trying to accomplish through your communication messages and activities. Communication goals should be measurable and could include such things as:
  - Increasing customer visits to a website by x percent
  - Providing information to drivers in order to reduce traffic volumes by x percent
  - Raising employee awareness of a new process by holding x number of training classes A communication plan can help team members be consistent in how they talk about the project/program/service by identifying key messages, audience, goals and desired outcomes.

- It helps team members stay focused on what you are trying to accomplish and clearly describes who will be responsible for doing what, by when.

- The plan should also include contact information for each of the team members, potential risks, as well as contingency plans and opportunities.

Developing a Communication Plan

Before you begin developing your plan, ask yourself how this effort fits with the Department of Transportation's mission and goals. Also ask yourself if your plan will affect other agencies, divisions, programs, modes or regions. Is it one of the Department's priorities? Does it demonstrate accountability? How will the results be measured?

Introduction:

This paragraph contains general background information. It should briefly describe:

- What the issue is
- Why it needs to be addressed
- Who is involved in the issue
- What is WSDOT's role

How does this program affect your audience?

In this section, you should answer the question, "What's in it for me?" You want to help your audience to understand why they should care about this issue, what benefits or changes they can expect, or what the consequences are if no action is taken. This section should also address, "Why should I believe you?" What is the basis for your recommendation/action/issue? What facts or data is available to support your claims?

What is the purpose of your communication efforts? (Communication goals)

- What do you want to have happen?
- What will people think/know/understand?
- What will it look like when you've reached your goal?
- How will others perceive the Department?

It's more and more important for communication efforts to clearly identify opportunities to measure success. Every communication plan, regardless of format or style, should include a section on measurement.

Who is your target audience(s)

Be as specific as you can – what does your audience think, know, do? You may want to break your audiences into groups:

- Primary – this is the audience that is most affected

- Secondary – this includes people, groups, or organizations who may not be directly affected, but have a high interest

- Influencers – these are the people, groups, and organizations that may sway others' opinions – either positively or negatively – with their views. Examples: media, politicians, special-interest groups.

What are the key messages?

What are the main messages you want to communicate?

- Use plain language

- Answer the question, "If there is one thing I want my audience to know, what would that be?"

- You can list more than one key message, but try to reach consensus about which is your top priority.

- Keep your list as short as possible.

What are your communication strategies?

What overall approach will help you achieve your objectives? This is not intended to be a list of specific tasks or tactics. (A strategy is usually the timeless, big picture, overall plan to achieve your goal, whereas a tactic is the procedure/tool/technology you will use.) Examples:

- **No surprises**: We are the first and best source of information about our agency, whether the news is good or bad. We anticipate customers' needs and provide the information they need in advance.

- **Manage expectations:** The work WSDOT does can be difficult and unpredictable. We will help customers know and understand that; and we will tell the construction story in a candid manner as the work happens. We will discuss risks and what we're doing to minimize them, for example, contingency plans.

- **Plain talk:** We speak in language people understand and use themselves.

- **Coordinated messaging:** We will provide consistent information across regional or agency boundaries and among our partners. Everyone on the team will use the same key messages.

- **Lead with the web:** All communication products will be accessible on WSDOT's (internal/external) website and social media channels.

- **Not a one-size-fits-all strategy:** This plan recognizes that employees and external stakeholders have different ways of receiving information and we will need to tailor communications to different audiences.

WSDOT is the first and best source of information about the agency, whether the news is good or bad. We provide accurate, timely, complete and open communications on issues for which we are responsible.

The amount of effort required in developing the public-involvement plan should be proportional to both the size of the planning effort and the degree of controversy expected.

Key dates (samples)

- When did the program or activity start?

- What are the milestones?

- What related activities/events will influence your issue?

- When do you expect the program/activity/issue to be resolved or completed?

Communication outcomes

- This will list the result you want to achieve. Be as specific as possible, for example: Increase visits to the project website by 80 percent.

- Your result must include a measurement tool
  - Informal – conversations, feedback, media stories generated
  - Formal – survey results, number of meetings, visits to website

Potential obstacles, risks and opportunities

- Identify issues that may come up during the planning process and be prepared for them.

- Examples of issues that may come up:
  - Poor relations from past projects
  - Confusion with other planning efforts
  - Specific groups and individuals with whom it may be difficult to deal

Team members and affiliations

List the names, organizations, and phone numbers of all the players who are involved in developing your plan and will be responsible for carrying out the tasks you identify.

Communications tool options:

Only list those tools you recommend for the project.

- news releases
- fact sheets
- folio
- Web update
- Social media (Twitter, Facebook, Blog, YouTube)
- speaking engagements
- talking points
- PowerPoint presentation
- media tour
- variable message signs
- highway advisory radio
- newspaper insert
- op-ed
- public access TV
- letters to public officials
- WSDOT at community meetings
- open houses/hearings
- public service announcements
- fairs and trade shows

Communications task (sample)

Activity/ tool	Audience	Staff Lead	Target date	Status	Done
Write briefing paper about project	Legislators				
Create/update website	Stakeholders				
Develop draft communication strategy	Agency staff				
Create/ revise brochure	Target audiences				
Compose press releases for each affected corridor	Local media				
Reach out to public about changes Press releases News tips to media signage	Commuters, transit providers, freight industry				
Arrange media event	Media, local officials				
Arrange ribbon cutting	Media, local officials				
Communication with WSP	Washington State Patrol				

What is a community engagement plan?

- "Community engagement" is WSDOT's term for our public involvement efforts. Our agency's federally compliant public involvement plan is WSDOT's Community Engagement Plan.

- A community engagement plan creates a framework that ensures all voices are heard, emphasizing the fair and meaningful involvement of all people including minority and low-income populations.

- While a communication plan lays out what you are communicating, the community engagement plan focuses on how you will communicate and ensures people have a voice in the decision-making process.

- Community engagement plans are developed to increase consent on decisions, enhance understanding and improve public access to information and decision making.

Resource: FHWA Transportation Public Involvement Guide

Special Event Planning - Why should you host an event?

Special events can help us celebrate milestones, highlight achievements, introduce our customers to something new and build relationships within a community. They also require resources and advance planning, so the decision to host an event should not be made lightly.

Before deciding to host a special event, think about:

- What is your communication goal – what are you trying to accomplish?

- Who needs to be involved – are the right people at the table?

- What budget and resources will be needed – who is paying for the event and are there partnerships that can be leveraged?

- How you will promote your event – who is your audience and what tools might be used to get the word out?

- Your special event planning efforts, timelines and budget should be commensurate to the size and scale of your project or service.

Some common reasons for hosting a special event include:

- Celebrating project milestones: groundbreaking, starting a new phase of construction, project completion (example: keel laying, opening a new bridge)

- Raising awareness of a product, service or program (example: new tolling passes, expanded rail service or Incident Response program)

- Sharing information about how taxpayer money is being spent and the expected benefits of projects or services (example: a booth or fair display to talk about upcoming work in the community)

- Educating our customers about how to use something that might be new or unique to them (example: roundabouts or variable speed signs)

Responding to requests from the Governor or legislators (example: highlighting Connecting Washington funded projects)

Project open houses and other community engagement meetings, require a different level of planning than special events and should follow the guidance provided in WSDOT's Community Engagement Plan.

Special event planning checklist

Even the most organized can forget something on event day. Plan ahead by using this list.

Draft an event plan

Use input from your project engineer to create a communications plan.

Get your plan approved

Make an appointment with your executives, project office staff and the communications director to review the event communications plan. Be prepared to talk about the following items:

Proposed dates for the event

- Why are these dates important?
- Is there a risk this date may shift?

Project facts: Don't assume everyone knows

- Project key messages
- The key benefits of this project
- Safety record
- Environmental record
- All regular cost, benefit, on-time, on-budget issues
- How was this project funded?
- Is this project controversial for any reason?
- Did this project overcome any challenges during construction?
- Traffic info: traffic volume, crash data etc.

Invite list: Speakers and non-speakers

- Share and discuss the draft invite text
- Who was invited to attend/speak and why?
- Legislative district (have names and faces of dignitaries)
- Stakeholders who should be acknowledged by elected officials or the Secretary of Transportation and why
- Identify who is tracking RSVPs and speaking order

Logistics

- Event script beginning to end
- Event location and lay out
- What's your visual for the media?
- What's your plan for social media?
- What are you including in your media packet?
- Do you need a pre-activity safety plan?
  - Dress: Ok for heels? Flats? Hard hats and vests?
- Maps and location
  - How do attendees get to your event?
- Roles and responsibilities
  - Leading up to the event
  - The day of the event

Execute your plan

Develop a task list for other communications staff. Set up a meeting with those team members and put appointments on their calendars.

Prior to the event

- Make sure you have a power source at the site – such as a generator, power strip, etc.
- Decide photo op
- Update your project's web profile:
  - Get rid of outdated info on the project page.
  - Publicize your event with a blog, social media or email update
- Draft a press release
  - Get quotes from other speakers to put into release
- Draft a media advisory
- Assemble media packets (news release, fact sheet, etc.)
- Draft and distribute talking points to region communicators and the social media team
- Draft intranet news items – recognize the project office

On-site roles during the event

- Cargo van driver, if needed to deliver supplies, chairs, etc.
- On-site contact for media and lost guests
- Photos and video
- Facebook Live or live Tweeting
- Media handler – should also have media packets
- Transportation Secretary and elected official handler
- Sound system and mult-box setup (a metal box with multiple outlets of a single audio source – allows media to plug-in to record the microphone feed)
- Setup and teardown of tents and visuals
- Guest check-in
- Make sure this person has talking points, run of show and can answer questions for speakers.

Office roles during the event

- Send media advisory and make calls to stations
- Post / send press release
- Social media / media monitoring

Post event

- Debrief with your team
  - What went well?
  - What can you improve?
  - Do you need to follow up with media?
  - What are reporters and people on social media saying?
- Web work
  - Links to photos and press release from your project webpage, when you are done with video, post the video link
  - Story for the intranet news (a shout out to a particular project office or team?)
- Social media
  - Use social media to keep your story alive or enhance coverage
    - Proof of performance blog
    - Facebook live
    - Reddit
    - Twitter

- Provide story for email alert lists
- Upload Flickr photos and tell a good story for each of them
- Upload video
- Proactively answer social media questions about the project on Reddit, Facebook and Twitter

Talking Points Template

Name of Event

Time (speaking start time), Date, Location of Event

Welcome/Introduction:

- Thank you for inviting me / opportunity to speak –
    - Any special recognitions?
        - Include phonetic spelling for uncommon names
    - If out-of-state guests, welcome to Washington –
        - highlight a few special transportation-related things about the state
    - Anything else the audience needs to know in advance?
- Shared connection to the audience, if appropriate
- Brief overview of the presentation topic that will be covered – Example: Today I'm going to talk about our transportation challenges and how we're managing through them

Use bold type to state the main point of the paragraph

- Use bullets with key words - don't write in full sentences!
- Use white space for ease of scanning
- Support the main point
    - Provide facts, statistics, results or important numbers – but limit them

Conclusion

- Remind audience how the topic relates to them, what WSDOT is doing
- What do you want the audience to do? What's the call to action?
    - o How can they support or partner with WSDOT?
- Thank you / Questions?

Secretary of Transportation Speaking Engagement Request

Event Details

- Event (describe the event)
- Date/Time:
- Location:
- Parking Availability:
- Event Contact:
- WSDOT Staff contact:

Time Secretary Should Arrive:

Time Secretary Anticipated To Speak (start time and minutes alloted for presenting/Q&A)

Event Format

- Audience Size?
- Room Size and Set up?
- Media? (Y/N)
- Attire? (Formal/Informal)

Remarks (What would you like the Secretary to say? - please use bullet points

New Release Template

Editor's note: MEDIA AVAILABILITY – (For use during high profile construction or fast-moving, crisis situations to let media know there will be interview opportunities.) Place at the very top of the release. Example: WSDOT communications will be available at 4:30 a.m., Friday, March 25, in the Shoreline Traffic Management Center to talk about the I-5 narrow lanes and lane shift for the weekend work.

Washington State Department of Transportation (Arial 12-pt.) **– NEWS** (14-pt.)
Your Region – Region Address - City, WA 98XXX-XXXX – region phone number XXX-XXX-XXXX (Arial 10-pt.)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Month, date, 20XX (abbreviate months according to AP style)

[NOTE: For corrections, updates and cancelled work, state the corrected or changed information at the top of your release, using red font. Do not use "see update in red below" as not everyone can see red on mobile devices. Remember to revise the web version of the release as well. Examples of each scenario are listed below.]

CORRECTION: Example: Please note the news release has been updated to reflect that 300 concrete panels will be removed. (Then, in the body of the release/advisory, delete the incorrect information and replace it with the correct information.)

UPDATE: Example: Please note the lane closures are now scheduled to begin at 9 p.m. (Then, in the body of the release/advisory, delete the old information and replace it with the new information.)

CANCELED: For work canceled but not rescheduled. Example: The closure scheduled to begin at Time a.m./p.m. on Day, Month Date, is canceled due to XXXX. It will be rescheduled to a later date. (There is no need to change anything in the body of the release/advisory.)

Contacts: Contact Name (w/email hyperlink), communications*, area code-xxx-xxxx, [If including cell number:] xxx-xxx-xxxx (mobile)
Project Engineer Name, project engineer, area code-xxx-xxxx

[* Only use "**WSDOT** communications" if this is a joint release and it's needed to distinguish agency staff, e.g., WSP communications]

Arial 18-pt. headline – If using roadway name, include city or area, use sentence case
Option 14 pt. subhead that includes dollar figures, detailed geography, improvements or secondary issue

DATELINE – The dateline should be the city where the event takes place, not where you sit. Olympia can be used for statewide releases. Please follow the same fonts, spacing and justification that are laid out in this release. (Times New Roman, 12-pt)

Try to keep your release to one page, and tout the benefit of your project in your opening paragraph whenever possible.

Feel free to relegate first references to Washington State Department of Transportation to the second paragraph. Doing so can free up space in your opening paragraph for clever turns of phrase, news hooks and key messages. And, abbreviate to WSDOT on second reference.

Mention the name of the contractor in project-related releases, and explain why and how traffic is affected without saying "we" and "you."

"We don't have to have a quote in every news release – it's not always necessary," said Project Engineer Quotable Quotes. "But if you want one, please write it in a way that sounds like something someone would say to their neighbor. Not something you'd read in a manual."

If you're quoting Roger, use the title, Secretary of Transportation Roger Millar said, or said Roger Millar, secretary of transportation. Titles before names are capitalized, but not when they follow a name. If you need to distinguish Roger from the U.S. Secretary of Transportation, the title Washington Transportation Secretary Roger Millar is acceptable.

Use hyperlinks in the body of the release to make it work faster and harder. Modern media sites are hungry for pictures and videos.

Get your release reviewed and approved with these steps:
- Send the release to newsdraft@wsdot.wa.gov for review.
- Roger and Governor quotes require additional approvals and review time, so plan ahead.
- Post the release to the WSDOT newsroom www.wsdot.wa.gov/about/news before sending to the media.
- Notify the Web team (webhelp@wsdot.wa.gov) so they can plan for Facebook and Twitter updates.
- Add "WSDOT News:" to the email subject line followed by the headline.
- Meeting and open-house related releases require ADA and Title VI language (see below) and should use the Open House template.

Include a bulleted list of the hyperlinks at the end of the release. Set it apart with two spaces from the previous paragraph and reduce the font size to 11.

Hyperlinks within the release: (Times New Roman, 11-pt.)
- Pictures: www.flickr.com/photos/wsdot *(words used here should match the words linked in the text, not the name of the website; these are examples, yours can be more descriptive, such as the damaged bridge, the new roadway, etc.. Link to the album or specific photo, not the main WSDOT Flickr site. Hyperlinks should also follow the same order as they appear in the body of the release.)*
- Video: www.youtube.com/wsdot *(link to the specific video, not the main WSDOT YouTube site)*
- WSDOT newsroom: www.wsdot.wa.gov/about/news/
- ADA language: www.wsdot.wa.gov/equalopportunity/titlevi_ada_language.htm *(this is included as an example but is not needed in this because it's included in boilerplate below if needed)*

After the body of the release, add a center-justified set of three pound signs and the standard boilerplate.

###

WSDOT keeps people, businesses and the economy moving by operating and improving the state's transportation systems. To learn more about what we're doing, go to www.wsdot.wa.gov/about/news for pictures, videos, news and blogs. Real time traffic information is available at wsdot.com/travel/real-time or by dialing 511.

To unsubscribe to WSDOT media releases please reply and type REMOVE in the subject line.

[For releases announcing open houses and other public meetings or hearings, use the OPEN HOUSE TEMPLATE which already includes the language below and proper formatting for the event details. This language is not needed on most standard news releases unless it involves an event open to the public].

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information
Accommodation requests for people with disabilities can be made by contacting the WSDOT Diversity/ADA Affairs team at wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov or by calling toll-free, 855-362-4ADA (4232). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may make a request by calling the Washington State Relay at 711.

Title VI Statement to Public: It is WSDOT's policy to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated against under any of its federally funded programs and activities. Any person who believes his or her Title VI protection has been violated may file a complaint with WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity. For additional information regarding Title VI complaint procedures and/or information regarding our non-discrimination obligations, please contact OEO's Title VI Coordinator at 360-705-7090.

Media Advisory Template

Washington State Department of Transportation (Arial 12-pt.)
Your Region – Region Address - City, WA 98XXX-XXXX – region phone number XXX-XXX-XXXX (Arial 10-pt.)

MEDIA ADVISORY – Not for publication
Month, date, 20XX (abbreviate months according to AP style)

Contacts: Contact Name (w/email hyperlink), communications*, area code-xxx-xxxx, [If including] xxx-xxx-xxxx (mobile)
Project Engineer Name, project engineer, area code-xxx-xxxx

[* Only use "WSDOT communications" if this is a joint release and it's needed to distinguish agency staff, e.g., WSP communications]

Arial 18-pt. headline – If using roadway name, include city or area, use sentence case

DATELINE – The dateline should be the city where the event is taking place, not where you sit when you gather the info. Use the same fonts, spacing and justification as in this template. (Times New Roman, 12-pt.)

A Media Advisory briefly announces a specific event or activity for media to go-see-do. Always provide the following:

(eg: SR 111 groundbreaking ceremony)

When: time day, date

Where: (e.g., 111 SE 53rd St., Federal Way. The lot is behind the shopping center, follow the signs. Directions below. Include a map, especially if the location is undeveloped and has no address.)

Speakers: Names, titles and affiliations, if others outside of WSDOT

Visuals: Describe the activity broadcast media and photographers will be able to record.

Important information: Provide specific directions, instructions, equipment required (Please wear sturdy shoes. We will provide hard hats and high-visibility vests. Media will be escorted or driven into the work zone, etc.)

Add link to appropriate website for more information. If including a website, or any other linked text, include a hyperlink list as seen below.

Get your media advisory reviewed and approved with these steps:
• Send the media advisory to newsdraft@wsdot.wa.gov for review. (Allow a minimum 24 hour turnaround. In urgent situations, contact the editor of the week).

- Add "WSDOT Media Advisory:" to the email subject line, followed by the headline.

Hyperlinks within the release: (Times New Roman, 11-pt.)
- Pictures: www.flickr.com/photos/wsdot *(words used here should match the words linked in the text, not the name of the website; these are examples from the News Release template, yours can be more descriptive such as the damaged bridge, the new roadway, etc. Link to the album or specific photo, not the main WSDOT Flickr site. Hyperlinks should also follow the same order as they appear in the body of the release.)*
- Video: www.youtube.com/wsdot *(link to the specific video, not the main WSDOT YouTube site)*

After the body of the release, add a center-justified set of three pound signs and the standard boilerplate.

WSDOT keeps people, businesses and the economy moving by operating and improving the state's transportation systems. To learn more about what we're doing, go to www.wsdot.wa.gov/about/news for pictures, videos, news and blogs. Real time traffic information is available at wsdot.com/travel/real-time/ or by dialing 511.

To unsubscribe to WSDOT media releases please reply and type REMOVE in the subject line.

Travel Advisory Template

Washington State Department of Transportation (Arial,12-pt.)
Your region – region address - City, WA 98xxx-xxxx – 360-xxx-xxxx (Arial, 10-pt.)

TRAVEL ADVISORY
Month, date, 20xx (abbreviate months according to AP style)

[NOTE: For corrections, updates and cancelled work, state the corrected or changed information at the top of your release, using red font. Do not use "see update in red below" as not everyone can see red on mobile devices. Examples of each scenario are listed below.]

CORRECTION: Example: Please note the news release has been updated to reflect that 300 concrete panels will be removed. (Then, in the body of the release/advisory, delete the incorrect information and replace it with the correct information.)
UPDATE: Example: Please note the lane closures are now scheduled to begin at 9 p.m. (Then, in the body of the release/advisory, delete the old information and replace it with the new information.)
CANCELED: For work canceled but not rescheduled. Example: The closure scheduled to begin at Time a.m./p.m. on Day, Month Date, is canceled due to XXXX. It will be rescheduled to a later date. (There is no need to change anything in the body of the release/advisory.)

Contacts: Contact Name (w/email hyperlink), communications*, area code-xxx-xxxx
Project Engineer Name, project engineer, area code-xxx-xxxx

[* Only use "**WSDOT** communications" if this is a joint release and it's needed to distinguish agency staff, e.g., WSP communications]

Arial, 18-pt. headline – If using roadway name, include city or area, use sentence case

DATELINE – The dateline should be the city where the event is taking place, not where you sit when you gather the info. Statewide releases are OLYMPIA. Use Times New Roman, 12-point type, with the same spacing and justification as in this template. You may use bullets.

A Travel Advisory is used for short-term, non-urgent lane, ramp or maintenance closures that will have an effect on traffic flow or roadway configuration. It can be used to update changing conditions for drivers during an ongoing project, PROVIDED that a news release describing the project has gone out previously. **NOTE: If this is the first time announcing a project or work with significant traffic impacts, such as closure of the entire highway, use the News Release template.**

Travel advisories do not post to the Web news page, so your audience will not be able to refer back to the information later on. If your information needs to have a longer shelf-life, write a news release instead of an advisory.

A Travel Advisory does not go through the editor review process, but AP Style must still be used on these documents.

Include an embedded link for more project or traffic information.

Hyperlinks within the release: (Times New Roman, 11-pt.)
- Pictures: www.flickr.com/photos/wsdot *(words used here should match the words linked in the text, not the name of the website; these are examples from the News Release template, yours can be more descriptive, such as the damaged bridge, the new roadway, etc. Link to the album or specific photo, not the main WSDOT Flickr site. Hyperlinks should also follow the same order as they appear in the body of the release.)*
- Videos: www.youtube.com/wsdot

After the body of the release, add a center-justified set of three pound signs and the standard boilerplate.

<div align="center">###</div>

WSDOT keeps people, businesses and the economy moving by operating and improving the state's transportation systems. To learn more about what we're doing, go to www.wsdot.wa.gov/about/news for pictures, videos, news and blogs. Real time traffic information is available at wsdot.com/travel/real-time/ or by dialing 511.

To unsubscribe to WSDOT media releases please reply and type REMOVE in the subject line.

Open House Template

Washington State Department of Transportation (Arial 12-pt.) **– NEWS** (14-pt.)
Your Region – Region Address - City, WA 98XXX-XXXX – region phone number XXX-XXX-XXXX (Arial 10-pt.)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Month date, 20XX (abbreviate months according to AP style)

Contacts: Contact Name (w/email hyperlink), communications*, area code-xxx-xxxx, [If including cell number:] xxx-xxx-xxxx (mobile)
Project Engineer Name, project engineer, area code-xxx-xxxx

[* Only use "**WSDOT** communications" if this is a joint release and it's needed to distinguish agency staff, e.g., WSP communications]

Arial 18-pt. headline – Mention open house, meeting or comments sought; include city if using roadway
Option 14 pt. subhead that includes date of open house (if not in headline) dollar figures, detailed geography, improvements) or secondary issue

DATELINE – The dateline should be the city where the event takes place, not where you sit. Olympia can be used for statewide releases. Please follow the same fonts, spacing and justification that are laid out in this release. (Times New Roman, 12 pt.)

Try to keep your release to one page, and tout the benefit of your project in your opening paragraph whenever possible. Tell people what they can do or learn at the open house – not just that we're holding a meeting for them: learn about proposed changes to the roundabout; share suggestions on ways to improve traffic through town, etc.

Feel free to relegate first references to Washington State Department of Transportation to the second paragraph. Doing so can free up space in your opening paragraph for clever turns of phrase, news hooks and key messages. And, abbreviate to WSDOT on second reference. Avoid using "we" and "you" when explaining the project and its benefits.

Breakout the open house details for easy reading and scanning, using the format below.

(Subject) open house information
When: Include time, day of week and date (5 to 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 14)

Where: Location and address

Details: Is there a formal presentation that starts at a specific time? Is this a drop-in event where people can stop in whenever? Will staff be on hand to answer questions or take comments? Will displays or design drawings be available for viewing?

Include cost and construction/completion dates if available and appropriate: The $15.4 million project is scheduled to begin in April and be completed in October.

Open houses and other public meetings MUST use the expanded ADA language at the bottom of this release.

If other agencies are participating as part of the open house, be sure to include that and what those agencies will be speaking about.

"We don't have to have a quote in every news release – it's not always necessary," said Project Engineer Quotable Quotes. "But if you want one, please write it in a way that sounds like something someone would say to their neighbor. Not something you'd read in a manual."

Use hyperlinks in the body of the release to make it work faster and harder. Modern media sites are hungry for pictures and videos.

Get your release reviewed and approved with these steps:
- Send the release to newsdraft@wsdot.wa.gov for review.
- Post the release to the WSDOT newsroom www.wsdot.wa.gov/about/news before sending to the media.
- Notify the Web team (webhelp@wsdot.wa.gov) so they can plan for Facebook and Twitter updates.
- Add "WSDOT News:" to the email subject line followed by the headline.

Include a bulleted list of the hyperlinks at the end of the release. Set it apart with two spaces from the previous paragraph and reduce the font size to 11.

Hyperlinks within the release: (Times New Roman, 11-pt.)

- Pictures: www.flickr.com/photos/wsdot *(words used here should match the words linked in the text, not the name of the website; these are examples from the News Release template, yours can be more descriptive, such as the damaged bridge, the new roadway, etc. Link to the album or specific photo, not the main WSDOT Flickr site. Hyperlinks should also follow the same order as they appear in the body of the release.)*
- Videos: www.youtube.com/wsdot
- WSDOT newsroom: www.wsdot.wa.gov/about/news

After the body of the release, add a center-justified set of three pound (or hashtag) signs and the standard boilerplate.

<p style="text-align:center">###</p>

WSDOT keeps people, businesses and the economy moving by operating and improving the state's transportation systems. To learn more about what we're doing, go to www.wsdot.wa.gov/about/news for pictures, videos, news and blogs. Real time traffic information is available at wsdot.com/travel/real-time/ or by dialing 511.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information
Accommodation requests for people with disabilities can be made by contacting the WSDOT Diversity/ADA Affairs team at wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov or by calling toll-free, 855-362-4ADA (4232). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may make a request by calling the Washington State Relay at 711.

Title VI Statement to Public: It is WSDOT's policy to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated against under any of its federally funded programs and activities. Any person who believes his or her Title VI protection has been violated may file a complaint with WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity. For additional information regarding Title VI complaint procedures and/or information regarding our non-discrimination obligations, please contact OEO's Title VI Coordinator at 360-705-7090.

To unsubscribe to WSDOT media releases please reply and type REMOVE in the subject line.

CHAPTER 3
WRITING

WSDOT uses a number of communication tools to share agency information. Each of these tools employs a different "tone," ranging from formal to informal, from serious to conversational, to humorous. In every case, we strive to remain professional, respectful and empathetic to the reader.

- **Blog** – Write a blog in a tone similar to what you would use in conversation with a neighbor. Personal perspective is encouraged to help engage your readers; share your own experience with the topic, if it helps to make your point.

- **Email** – The tone in an email can be either formal or informal and conversational, depending on the situation and your relationship with the reader. Keep in mind that emails can be disclosed and made public. If you would not be comfortable seeing your email published, then revise your tone. Sensitive topics might be best discussed over the phone.

- **Letters** – Letters are considered the agency's official correspondence and generally have a more formal tone. Responses should be written in a clear, concise manner, avoiding agency jargon and using plain talk language. Most agency correspondence is subject to public disclosure.

- **News releases** – News releases should be informative and factual and use a more formal tone. Avoid statements such as, "drivers will be pleased…" because we really can't know what their reaction will be; instead, focus on what action we're taking, "repairs will reduce ruts and smooth the driving surface…" Personal perspectives and opinions in news releases are only acceptable when used as part of a quote and attributed to an individual.

- **Twitter** – Information sent out through Twitter is informal and limited to 140 characters, so abbreviations and hashtag# links are used often to direct readers to additional detail. Tweets can get news out quickly to WSDOT followers; to increase success, be relevant, be informative and be personable. When used appropriately, a witty or humorous tweet is often the most effective way to get your message shared and reach a broad audience.

The WSDOT Style Guide is periodically updated. For the most up to date style guide go to: wsdot.wa.gov/about/ current-employees/ wsdot-style-guide-and-communications-manual

Questions and suggestions are always welcome. Please contact the Communications office at 360-705-7075.

Correspondence guidelines

Welcome to the WSDOT Correspondence Guidelines. The Secretary's and Communications offices collaborated to provide you with the following guidelines.

These guidelines have been prepared so we can maintain consistency when writing agency correspondence. These guidelines are not set in stone. We ask that you use your best judgment to keep a professional look to outgoing correspondence.

In addition to these guidelines, you can find helpful information on the Governor's Plain Talk Web page: www.governor.wa.gov/issues/issues/efficient-government/plain-talk.

We hope you find these guidelines helpful. If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact Audrey Hayes at 360-705-7075, Kimberly Colburn at 360-705-7412 or Jo Dayton at 360-705-7054.

Thank you for all the good work you do for our customers.

Correspondence Formats and Tips

Electronic letterhead templates are available on the WSDOT intranet site under Employee Resources/Forms.

If you are sending your correspondence electronically, remember to include alternative text in any correspondence that includes diagrams, tables, graphics and other images.

Alternative text is a word or phrase that provides alternative, text-based description of information contained in the images. This information is useful for people with vision or cognitive impairments. You can find the instructions for including alternative text to your electronic correspondence online.

Two sets of eyes are better than one. Please ask a fellow staff member to review your correspondence before sending it to the Secretary's office or directly to the customer.

Letter Format

**Washington State
Department of Transportation**

March 10, 2020 *4 Returns*

> • Full-block style.
> • Left margin line up under "W" & "D", not "flying T" logo.
> • First page top margin: 2.2 inches.
> • Bottom, left, right margins: 1 inch.
> • Right margin not justified.
> • Single space.
> • Font: 12 point Times New Roman.

Mr. Thomas Williams
1234 Harvest Street
Federal Way, WA 98023 *2 Returns*

Re: (Optional) Safety on highways *2 Returns*

Dear Mr. Williams: *2 Returns*

Thank you for your March 8 letter regarding the safety of our highways and the need for more transportation mobility options. Comments such as yours give our agency valuable insights into the important issues facing people in communities throughout the state. We rely on communication with our customers to help us determine what is working and what isn't, and where we need to concentrate our efforts. *2 Returns*

Again, thank you for contacting us about this matter. We will certainly consider your feedback. *2 Returns*

Sincerely, *4 Returns*

Roger Millar, PE, FASCE, FAICP (Do not type name in all caps)
Secretary of Transportation *2 Returns*

RM:jd
Enclosures *2 Returns*

> • Include signer's initials in upper case followed by colon and typist initials in lower case.
> • Enclosure used for letters.
> • Attachment used for memo.

cc: Robin Mayhew, WSDOT
        Pasco Bakotich, WSDOT
        Chris Christopher, WSDOT

Letter Format Continuation Pages

Mr. Thomas Williams
March 10, 2020 (Make sure date is before the page number.)
Page 2 (Page number should be numeric format) *2 Returns*

Continue the correspondence two returns from the last line above.

- Use plain paper (not letterhead).
- Top margin: 1 inch.
- Text of second page begins two returns from page number line.
- Left margin same as text on first page: 1 inch.

Memo Format

**Washington State
Department of Transportation**

Memorandum

DatePlaceholder *3 Returns*

TO: ToPlaceholder
            MailStopPlaceholder *2 Returns*

THRU: ThruPlaceholder (if applicable) *2 Returns*

FROM: FromPlaceholder
            PhonePlaceholder 2 Returns

SUBJECT: SubjectPlaceholder *3 Returns*

- First page top margin: 2.25 inches.
- Bottom, left, right margins: 1 inch.
- Right margin not justified.
- Single space.
- Font: 12 point Times New Roman.
- If necessary to route correspondence through another person for review and concurrence, use THRU.

This Memorandum template was created to assist you in formatting correspondence used to transmit information **within** the department.   Please do not alter the header or footer information. *4 Returns*

Signer:Typist'sInitialsPlaceholder
Attachment: AttachmentPlaceholder

cc: ccPlaceholder

- Include signer's initials in upper case followed by colon and typist initials in lower case.
- Attachment used for memo.

Address/Salutation Format

For the inside address, avoid using more than five typed lines for the address. No line in the address is to extend beyond the middle of the page.

City	
The Honorable James Smith Mayor, City of Mercer Island	Dear Mayor Smith:
The Honorable Mary Johnson Olympia City Council	Dear Councilwoman/man Johnson:
Chief John Doe Olympia Police Department	Dear Chief Doe:

County	
The Honorable James Doe Thurston County Commissioner	Dear Commissioner Doe:
The Honorable John Doe King County Executive	Dear Executive Doe:
Sheriff Jane Doe Benton County Sheriff's Office	Dear Sheriff Doe:

State	
The Honorable Jay Inslee Governor of Washington	Dear Governor Inslee:
The Honorable John Smith State Senate	Dear Senator Smith:
The Honorable Mary Doe House of Representatives	Dear Representative Doe:
James Smith Washington State Transportation Commission	Dear Commissioner Smith:

Federal	
The Honorable Mary Smith U.S. Senate	Dear Senator Smith:
The Honorable John Roe U.S. House of Representatives	Dear Congressman/woman Roe:

Tribal	
The Honorable Martha Johnson Lummi Nation	Dear Chairwoman/man Johnson:

Non-Elected	
Mr. Dan Mathis Division Administrator, FHWA	Dear Mr. Mathis:
Ms. Teresa Berntsen Director, Department of Licensing	Dear Ms. Berntsen

Letter-Writing Tips

General Guidelines

- State the purpose of the letter in the first paragraph.

- Double check spelling of names and addresses.

- Be conservative in the use of acronyms. When using, spell out the name or phrase the first time used (e.g., Office of Financial Management (OFM).

- Keep letters to one page if at all possible. The Governor prefers Times New Roman 12 font, side and bottom margins of 1 inch, and a top margin of 2.25 inches. However, you can revert to 11.5 font, side margins of .75, a top margin of 2, and a bottom margin of .5 in order to fit a letter on one page.

- Plurals Agreement: Your dedication to children, families, and your community is greatly appreciated. Your energy and dedication to your community are greatly appreciated.

- Double check subject-verb agreement.

- Redundancies: Do not repeat the same word or phrase several times in the same sentence, paragraph, or letter, if at all possible.

- Use the active voice. Avoid the passive voice.

> Active: I believe…
> Passive: It is believed…

Courtesy Copy

- Think about who needs a courtesy copy of the correspondence. If an individual is referenced in the text of the correspondence, the individual should receive a copy.

- If there are names listed to receive courtesy copies in the original correspondence (especially legislators or the Governor), they should also be listed to receive courtesy copies in the response.

- Type cc at the left margin, followed by a colon. Your word processing software may automatically change it to a Cc. Make sure you use two lowercase letters.

- If you are sending a copy to only one person, insert 2 spaces between the colon and the name.

  cc: John Doe

- If you are sending copies to multiple people, insert a tab after the colon in order to start all the names at the same point.

  cc: John Doe
          Jane Smith

1.   Followed by name, professional credentials (if appropriate) and agency.

  cc: Mary Doe, Washington State Department of Health

- Courtesy copies should be listed in this order. This is also the order of speakers at events.

    U.S. Senators and Representatives
    Governors
    State Senators
    State Representatives Other Elected Officials
    Agency Directors (secretaries or commissioners) Private Citizens
    Governor's Staff

- You are encouraged to make two-sided copies of correspondence, enclosures, attachments, etc.

Mailing Tips

Envelopes

- Envelopes should be printed in the same font as the letter, directly on the envelop or on a label.

- The United States Postal Service provides these guidelines:

    All capital letters No punctuation
    At least 10-point type
    One space between city and state
    Two spaces between state and ZIP Code

- Consolidated Mail Services provides these guidelines:

    The individual's name: MR JOHN SMITH
    The division or work unit: ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
    The agency: DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
    The PO Box number: PO BOX 42565
    The city, state and ZIP+4:   OLYMPIA WA 98504-2565

    OR

    The individual's name: MR JOHN SMITH
    The division or work unit: ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
    The agency: DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
    The street address: 123 ANY STREET
    The PO Box number: PO BOX 42565
    The city, state and ZIP+4:   OLYMPIA WA 98504-2565

- Do not show a person's title and office on the same line:

    Do   **Don't**
    John Doe   John Doe
    Chief of Staff   Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor
    Office of the Governor

    OR

    John Doe, Chief of Staff Office of the Governor

- Spell out numbers 1 through 10 use figures for 10th and above

    3 SEVENTH AVENUE SW

- Use numerals for numbers 10 and above

    104 36TH STREET NE

- If an address contains a string of numbers, do not put a dash between them

    Do   **Don't**
    12345 18TH AVENUE 12345-18TH AVENUE

Foreign Mail

Include the name of the country on all mail sent outside the United States. Separate it from other mail because it will require additional postage. Mark the pink slip as "International" and address the envelope using either of the following formats:

    Foreign Country   **Canada**
    MS MARTHA SMITH   MRS MARY DOE
    123 ADAMS STREET   123 ADAMS STREET
    LONDON WIP 6HQ   VICTORIA Z4C 286
    ENGLAND   CANADA

Professional Email Etiquette Tips

The purpose of email, like all writing, is to communicate. If you put speed above clarity, you will make your email recipient spend needless time trying to decipher what it is you want to communicate.

Include a clear, direct subject line

- Examples of a good subject line include "Meeting date changed," "Quick question about your presentation," or "Suggestions for the proposal."

- People often decide whether to open an email based on the subject line. Choose one that lets readers know you are addressing their concerns or business issues.

Use a professional email address and email background

- If you work for an agency, you should use your agency email address.

- You should always have an email address that conveys your name so that the recipient knows exactly who is sending the email.

- Using an Outlook stationary for your email background is not recommended.

Think twice before hitting 'reply all'

No one wants to read emails from 20 people that have nothing to do with them. Ignoring the emails can be difficult, with many people getting notifications of new messages on their smartphones or distracting pop-up messages on their computer screens. Refrain from hitting "reply all" unless you really think everyone on the list

needs to receive the email.

Include a signature block

- A signature block includes your full name, title, the agency name, and your contact information, including a phone number. It is advised that "replies" should also contain the same information so that the reader does not have to scroll down to find your information.

- Use the same font, type size as the rest of the email. Black is the preferred color for the font.

- You may also want to include pronouns in your signature block. Including your preferred pronouns in your email signature is an important move towards inclusivity, no matter what your gender.

  - ☐ Pronouns (gender pronouns, preferred gender pronouns) are used in language when referring to ourselves or other people. Examples of pronouns you might use to refer to yourself in your signature block are:

  - ☐ *he/him/his* (for someone who might identify as male)

  - ☐ *she/her/hers* (for someone who might identify as female)

  - ☐ *they/them/their* (for someone who might not identify strictly as male or female; these pronouns are considered gender neutral. They are also used when referring to multiple people).

Use professional salutations

- Do not use laid-back, colloquial expressions like, "Hey you guys," "Yo," or "Hi folks." The relaxed nature of our writings should not affect the salutation in an email. Use "Hi" or "Hello" instead.

- Do not shorten names. The recommendation is to write "Hi Michael," unless you are certain he prefers to be called "Mike."

Use exclamation points sparingly

If you choose to use an exclamation point, use only one to convey excitement. People sometimes get carried away and put a number of exclamation points at the end of their sentences. The result can appear too emotional or immature.

Be cautious with humor

- Humor can easily get lost in translation without the right tone or facial expressions. In a professional exchange, it is better to leave humor out of emails unless you know the recipient well. In addition, something that you think is funny might not be funny to someone else.

- Something perceived as funny when spoken may come across very differently when written. When in doubt, leave it out.

Keep tabs on your tone

- Just as jokes get lost in translation, tone is easy to misconstrue without the context you would get from vocal cues and facial expressions. Accordingly, it is easy to come off as more abrupt than you might have intended—you meant "straightforward;" they read "angry and curt."

- To avoid misunderstandings, read your message aloud before sending. If it sounds harsh to you, it will sound harsh to the reader.

- For best results, avoid using unequivocally negative words ("failure," "wrong," or "neglected"), and always say "please" and "thank you."

Know that people from different cultures speak and write differently

Miscommunication can easily occur because of cultural differences, especially in the written form where we cannot see one another's body language. Tailor your message to the receiver's cultural background or how well you know them.

Reply to your emails—even if the e-mail was not intended for you

- It is difficult to reply to every email message ever sent to you, but you should try to. This includes when the email was accidentally sent to you and the sender is expecting a reply. A reply is not necessary but serves as good email etiquette.

  - ⬚ Here is an example reply: "I know you're very busy, but I don't think you meant to send this email to me. I thought you should know so you could send it to the correct person."

Only include the original email with your response to a constituent

If you forwarded the constituent's email to a staff person for input and that staff person responded to you, do not include the internal email exchange in the final response to the constituent.

Proofread every message

- Your mistakes will not go unnoticed by the recipients of your email. Depending upon the recipient, you may be judged for making them.

- Do not rely on spell-checkers. Read and re-read your email a few times, preferably aloud, before sending it.

- You have more options with email closings than salutations. If you are making a request or filing a complaint, "Thank you" works well. Some letter closings also work well with email, including "Sincerely" and "Regards".

Add the email address last

You do not want to send an email accidentally before you have finished writing and proofing the message. Even when you are replying to a message, it is a good precaution to delete the recipient's address and insert it only when you are sure the message is ready to send.

Double-check that you have selected the correct recipient

Pay careful attention when typing a name from your address book on the email's "To" line. It is easy to select the wrong name, which can be embarrassing to you and to the person who receives the email by mistake.

Keep your fonts classic

- Purple Comic Sans has a time and a place, but for business correspondence, keep your fonts, colors and sizes classic.

- The cardinal rule: Your emails should be easy for other people to read.

- Generally, it is best to use 10- or 12-point type and an easy-to-read font such as Arial, Calibri or Times New Roman. As for color, black is the safest choice.

Be clear when sending signed letters/documents as pdf

Signed letters/documents that are transmitted as a pdf via email (no hardcopies mailed) should include *(Electronic Transmittal Only – Unless Requested)* above the signature block of the email.

Nothing is confidential--so write accordingly (Public Records Act Chapter 42 .56 RCW)

- Email is included in the Public Records Act. Be very careful in creating and responding to email.

- Always remember every electronic message leaves a trail.

- A basic guideline is to assume that others will see what you write. Do not write anything you would not want everyone to see. A more liberal interpretation: Do not write anything that would be ruinous to you or your agency. After all, email is dangerously easy to forward and it is better to be safe than sorry.

HQ Customer Service (HQCS) Referral Process and Coordinator Responsibility

Referral Types

There are three types of requests for response. These will be defined in more detail below.

2. Draft response for WSDOT Secretary of Transportation signature

3. Response on behalf of WSDOT Secretary of Transportation

4. 3Response on behalf of the Governor

Assigning Referrals

- There are three types of correspondence:

  - **Constituent email to the Secretary:** Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Transportation forwards the email to the executive with a cc to HQCS.

  - **Constituent letter to the Secretary received by US Mail:** Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Transportation will either give the original letter to HQCS and recommend someone to respond, or scan the letter and email it to HQCS.

  - **Constituent letter or email written to the Governor's Office:** The Governor's Constituent Services group emails correspondence to HQCS. HQCS determines assignment based on the constituent's concern.

- Each type of referral has different review processes. Please refer to the specific section under "*Response Requirements*" for the particular referral assigned to your division/region/program.

- HQCS will enter the correspondence in the Correspondence Tracking System and assign it a referral number. The referral (no longer called "Greenies") will always be assigned to an executive (division director, regional administrator (RA), or assistant secretary (AS) depending on the issue.

- HQCS will email the correspondence along with the referral instructions to the correspondence coordinator(s) and cc the assigned executive and their assistant.

- If the assigned executive determines a response is not needed or should be assigned elsewhere, email or call HQCS because the information will need to be updated in the Correspondence Tracking System.

Referral Instructions

A Referral Slip with instructions will be generated and attached to the email transmitting the correspondence for response. By default, the Referral Slip will always be "From" the Secretary of Transportation and the response due date auto-populates according to deadlines outlined below.

- Response Due: These are standards set by the Secretary's office for both Governor and Secretary "Referral Types." If you feel you cannot meet that deadline, inform HQCS and provide a date you expect to respond.

  - Letters or email: Five (5) working days after HQCS assigns referral.

  - Telephone calls: Three (3) working days after HQCS assigns referral.

- Assigned Executive: HQCS assigns the referral at the director level or above and forwards to the correspondence coordinator, assigned executive and executive assistant, if different from the correspondence coordinator. Responses on behalf of the Secretary should be signed by the executive listed in the "To" field on the Referral Slip or the executive's delegated signing authority per the division director, RA or AS.

- Action Needed: HQCS will request the method of response to be in the same format as the correspondence sent by the constituent, a written letter, email or phone call. The method for responding as listed on the Referral Slip is not set in stone. As long as HQCS receives a copy of the final response, the method of response can be determined by the assigned executive.

- Individuals listed as a cc on the Referral Slip and transmittal email should also receive a copy of the response.

Correspondence Coordinators

- Make sure the division director, RA or AS is aware of the referral and action needed. Please follow the directions listed on the referral instructions.

- Assign the referral for drafting a response according to your division/program/ region procedures or direction from the division director, RA or AS.

- Make sure the assigned author is aware of the referral process and your division/ program/region review requirements.

- Track the internal routing for response to ensure a timely submittal by the due date established in the referral instructions.

- Ensure the response is properly formatted, proofed and edited **before** it is moved forward to the next level of review or sent to the constituent. Proper format depends on the assigned action and type of referral. See response requirements and formatting below.

- Ensure responses sent on behalf of the Secretary or the Governor's office, include the proper lead-in language. (See sample lead-in-language under *Items 2 and 3 of Response Requirements*.) **Note:** At times, a constituent may write to the Governor and the Secretary with the same concern. If that is the case, the lead-in language should acknowledge response on behalf of both the Secretary and Governor.

- Check for additional response requirements from the respective Assistant Secretary's office.

Submitting Response to Constituent

- Written letters: Should be on the appropriate WSDOT letterhead for the signing authority. Be sure to reference the constituent's letter by date and topic.

- Emails: Include constituent's original email text below the response. All internal WSDOT instructions should be removed from the body of the email. Change the email subject line to match the issue referenced in the constituent's original email.

- Responses on letterhead can be sent via email as an attached pdf. See guidelines in *Sec. 3, References, Email Correspondence* for sample language to be added to the email transmittal.

- Governor Referral: See guidelines below in *Response Requirements - Item 3 - Response on Behalf of Governor*.

Submitting Response to HQCS

- When forwarding a copy of the final response to HQCS, **include the referral number in the subject line**.

- Written letters: Provide a scanned copy of the signed response to HQCS and cc the Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Transportation.

- Emails: Forward a copy of the email response to HQCS and cc the Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Transportation.

- Phone calls: Summarize the phone conversation with the constituent and forward the summary to HQCS and cc the Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Transportation.

- Governor Referrals: Forward the original email along with a copy of the final response to HQCS or cc HQCS when responding to the constituent. Be sure to also provide a copy of the response to the Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Transportation.

Response Requirements

1. Draft response for Secretary of Transportation signature

   - The Secretary's office requires **all draft responses** prepared for the Secretary of Transportation's signature to go through the following review stages:

     RA:

     Author → to RA → to AS/Chief Engineer → to Deputy Secretary, cc

     Executive Assistant to the Deputy Secretary and HQCS→ to Secretary of Transportation

     Division directors:

     Author → to division director → to AS → to Deputy Secretary, cc Executive Assistant to the Deputy Secretary and HQCS → to Secretary of Transportation

     Note: If drafting a response to a member of the Legislature, the Director of Legislative Relations should review the response before sending to the Deputy Secretary.

       - The assigned author should return draft responses for the Secretary's signature to the correspondence coordinator or executive assistant to ensure they are properly formatted on Transportation Headquaters Letterhead and signature-ready **before** submitting to next level for approval.

       - Do not send drafts directly to the Secretary of Transportation or Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Transportation. Once the response is in the final review stage and approved by the Deputy Secretary, the Executive Assistant to the Deputy Secretary will forward to the Secretary of Transportation and Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Transportation for signature and distribution.

       - When emailing the final draft response to the Secretary's office for the Deputy Secretary's review, provide the following in the email transmittal:

     - Final draft response with pertinent enclosures

     - Constituent's original request/letter and Referral Sheet

     - Pre-addressed labels for the constituent and others listed as a cc

     - Name of author who drafted response and others who have reviewed and/ or edited the draft

       - *Please Note:* HQCS has been instructed by the Secretary's office to decline draft responses that are not properly formatted. If not properly formatted, draft responses will be returned to the correspondence coordinator and executive assistant for priority action so as not to delay the process.

2. Response on behalf of the Secretary of Transportation

- When asked to respond on behalf of the Secretary, the letter or email should be signed by the executive listed in the "To" field on the referral instructions or another delegated executive per the division director, RA or AS. *Note:* for this purpose "delegated" is defined to be the executive delegated signing authority when the director is on annual leave.

- Include Secretary of Transportation as a cc on the response.

- The Secretary's office requires that all responses sent on behalf of the Secretary go through the following review stages and be formatted appropriately before sending to the constituent.

RA:

Author → to RA → to AS/Chief Engineer (see note below)→ to constituent

Division directors:

Author→ to division director → to AS (see note) → to constituent

Note: Review by assistant secretaries before sending to constituent is only needed if that is a requirement of your AS. Please check with the AS's executive assistant.

- Response formatting: The assigned author should send the draft back to the correspondence coordinator or executive assistant to ensure it is in proper format following these guidelines and to provide a second set of eyes for proofing.

- **Sample lead-in language for responding on behalf of the Secretary of Transportation:**

Secretary of Transportation [name] has asked me to respond to your March 7, 2020, letter regarding [topic-restate what they have written about].

Thank you for your letter of March 7, 2020, to Secretary of Transportation [name] regarding [topic-restate what they have written about]. As the director of [division/program], I have been asked to respond.

3. Response on behalf of the Governor's Office

- HQCS will forward referrals from the Governor's office to the correspondence coordinator, the assigned executive, the executive's assistant and the executive assistant to the Secretary of Transportation, with instructions for their region/division/program to respond directly to constituent on behalf of the Governor.

- Correspondence on behalf of the Governor should be signed by the executive listed in the "To" field of the referral instructions or designee.

- As the correspondence coordinator please ensure that **before** the response is sent to the constituent, it has gone through proper internal review (for proofing) and is properly formatted following the *Correspondence Guidelines* for responding on behalf of the Governor.

- **Sample lead-in language for responding on behalf of the Governor:**

  I have been asked to respond to your March 7, 2020, email to Governor [name] regarding [topic-restate what they have written about].

  Thank you for your letter of March 7, 2020, to Governor [name]. I have been asked to respond to your concerns regarding [topic-restate what they have written about].

  Thank you for your inquiry to Governor [name] about the US 195 Cheney- Spokane Interchange project. As the Regional Administrator responsible for the highways in this area, I have been asked to respond.

  Your message to Governor [name] was forwarded to me for a response. Thank you for writing and sharing your concern. I am the (Author's title) responsible for

- When responding via email, change the email subject line to match the issue referenced in the constituent's original email.

- Before sending your response to the constituent, be sure to only include the comments the constituent wrote to the Governor. All internal WSDOT instructions should be removed from the body of the email.

- Do not cc the Governor when responding to the constituent.

- Provide a copy of the response to HQCS and the Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Transportation by one of the following methods:

  - Include HQCS and Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Transportation as a cc when responding directly to constituent.

  - Forward a copy of the response to HQCS and Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Transportation in a separate email. Be sure to include the referral number in the subject line.

References

This section contains references for common questions about writing style, grammar and word usage. For more references, see:

- The *Gregg Reference Manual*
- Governor's Plain Talk Guidelines
- Governor's Executive & General Correspondence Guidelines

General Guidelines

- State the purpose of the correspondence in the first paragraph.
- Double check spelling of names and addresses.
- Double check plurals agreement.

  Your **dedication** to children and families **is** greatly appreciated.

  Your **energy and dedication** to your community **are** greatly appreciated.

- Be sure pronouns agree in number and gender with the nouns to which they refer.

  Incorrect: Each supervisor must sign their time card before leaving the training session.

  Correct: Each supervisor must sign a time card before leave the training session.

- Be conservative in the use of acronyms. Spell out the acronym with the first reference; then use the acronym for subsequent references without the parenthesis.

  Incorrect: Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)

  Correct: Washington State Department of Transportation. A few sentences later you use WSDOT.

Word Usage

Word Usage	Examples
Agencywide – one word not hyphenated	
A lot (**not:** alot) – many or much	Thanks **a lot** for your help.
Affect / Effect Affect (verb) - to influence Effect (noun) - result; (verb) - to bring about	The storm may **affect** our schedule. It will be months before we can assess the full **effect** of the new law. It is essential that we **effect** an immediate improvement in sales.
a .m . / p .m . – always lowercase with periods	
Assure / Ensure / Insure Assure (verb) – to cause to feel sure; refers to a person in the sense of "set the mind at rest" Ensure (verb) - to make certain Insure (verb) – to cover with insurance; to make certain or secure	I want to **assure** you that nothing will go wrong. I want to **ensure** that nothing can go wrong. I want to **insure** this necklace for $5,000.
It's / Its It's – short for "it is" or "it has" Its – possessive pronoun	**It's** time to go to the meeting. The company must protect **its** assets.
Percent – spelled out as one word	
Principal / Principle Principal (adj.) – most important; (noun) - one who holds post of presiding rank; sum of money invested Principle (noun) – a basic law or rule; moral or ethical standards	My **principal** reason for quitting is the commute. The **principal** of the school is retiring. I received an excellent return on my **principal**. Spending is a key **principle** of economics. He a person of **principle**.
Statewide – one word not hyphenated	
Which / That Which – introduces nonessential clause with comma or pair of commas; refers to places, objects and animals That – introduces essential clause with no comma; refers to places, objects and animals; refers to person when class or type is meant	*Gregg Reference Manual*
Who / Whoever – takes the place of he or she; is the subject in sentence; is the subject of dependent clause	*Gregg Reference Manual*
Whom / Whomever – takes the place of him, her or them; is an object in the sentence	*Gregg Reference Manual*
Who's / Whose Who's – short for 'who is" Whose – possessive form of who	**Who's** going to the party? **Whose** meeting are these?

Bureaucratic / Jargon	Replace with…
advise	tell, recommend
anticipate	expect
approximately	about
assist	help
benefit	help
close proximity	near
complete	fill out
cooperate	help
demonstrate	show, prove
disclose	show
endeavor	try
ensure	make sure
facilitate	help, ease
failed to	didn't
forward	send
furthermore	also
however	but
impact (as verb)	influence, affect, change, result in, have an effect on
implement	carry out, do
in addition	also
in an effort to	to
indicate	show
in regard to	about
interstate channelization	turn lanes
in the event that	if
in the near future	soon
limited number	few
location	place
maintain	keep, support
mitigate	alleviate, lessen, improve, decrease, reduce preserve
modify	change
monitor	check, watch
obtain	get
optimize	improve, enhance
optimum	best
partner	collaborator, participant, contributor, supporter
partnership	coordinating, collaborating
personnel	people
prior to	before

Bureaucratic / Jargon	Replace with…
provided that	if
request	ask
Bureaucratic / Jargon	Replace with…
require	need
review	check, go over
scenario	possibility
stakeholder	neighbors, businesses, local elected officials, commuters, and property owners (specifically name individual groups)
state	say
submit	send
subsequent	next
sufficient	enough
supply	send
therefore	so
this office	we, us
time period	time
upwardly mobile	ambitious
utilize	use
verification	proof
viable	workable
viable alternatives	alternatives, possibilities
whereas	since

Are you using two words that have the same meaning? Eliminate redundancies. Here are some examples of redundant words or terms.

advance warning

assemble together

perfectly clear

personal opinion

positively certain

great majority

consensus of opinion

serious interest

refer back

midway between

each and every one of us

very unique

final result

classify into groups

complete monopoly

endorse on the back

null and void

5 a.m. in the morning

past history

exactly identical

potential opportunity

few in number, state the number

basic fundamentals

collect together

proposed plan

integral part

contributing factor

dollar amount, give the amount

~~true~~ facts

~~new~~ changes

~~end~~ result

adequate ~~enough~~

commute ~~back and forth~~

depreciate ~~in value~~

~~root~~ causes

whether ~~or not~~

~~unexpected~~ emergency

Business-ese	Plain English
As I mentioned to you via our phone conversation…	As I mentioned during…
As per…	According to…
Attached please find, enclosed please find…	We have attached…
At your earliest convenience…	soon or by this (specific date)…
In accordance with your request…	As requested…
In the normal course of our procedure…	Normally, we…
We are not in the position to…	We cannot because…
We regret to inform you…	We regret… Unfortunately…
Thanking you in advance…	We appreciate anything you can send…
With reference to/with regard to…	about…
i.e.	that is…
e.g.	for example…
et al	and other people
etc.	and other things

Capitalization

Refrain from over-capitalization, especially in instances such as "This program has proved to be extremely valuable." Do not capitalize "program" in that sentence.

- biennium: capitalized only when referring to a specific biennium

    2019-21 Biennium
    The funds appropriated for this biennium

- committee, commission, board, department, director: capitalized only when referring to a specific body already mentioned by its full name

- federal: capitalized only when it is part of the official name of a federal agency

    the Federal Reserve Board
    subject to federal, state, and local laws

- Governor: always capitalized

- Governor's Mansion: always capitalized

- Lean: not an acronym, capitalize only first letter

- Legislature, 2020 Legislative Session, Congress, Senate, House, House of Representatives: always capitalized

- legislative, legislator, legislation: not capitalized

- senator, representative: capitalize when preceding a name

- state: capitalize only when it follows the name of a state

  Washington State
  the state of Washington

Numbers

Basic Form

- Spell out numbers ten and under. Use figures for numbers over ten.

  five requests   35 employees

- Spell out a number that begins a sentence, as well as any related numbers.

  Eight hundred employees worked that day.

- Express numbers in the millions or higher as a combination of words and figures.

  45 million   2.4 billion

Ordinal Numbers

- Spell out ordinal numbers that can be expressed in one or two words.

  eighth grade   forty-first reunion

Age

- Always use figures for age.

  Joe Smith was 41 years old when he was injured.
  The claimant is a 23-year-old man.
  My son is 3 years old.

Dates

- When the day *precedes* the month or *stands alone*, use ordinal figures or words.

  The claimant was hospitalized from Monday, the 2nd of August, through Thursday, the 5th.

- When the day follows the month, use cardinal figures.

  August 13, 2020   February 2020

- Do not use a comma when writing only the month and year.

  August 2020

- Do not separate the month from the day at the end of a line of text.

Percentages

- Use figures and always spell out percent. 18 percent   1 percent

Money

- Use figures for exact or approximate amounts of money.

  $5.60 $125
  over $1500 $44 million
  30 cents $44,345,478

Clock Time

- Always use figures with *a.m.* or *p.m.* For time "on the hour," zeros are not needed. Do not use *a.m.* or *p.m.* with *o'clock.*

  4:30 p.m.   3:30 to 6 p.m.

- *Noon* and *midnight* may be expressed in words alone. However, use the forms *12 noon* and *12 midnight* when the times are given with other times expressed in figures.

  12 noon   4:30 p.m.

Plurals

Do	Don't
Sixes and Sevens	6's and 7's
6s and 7s	

Fiscal Years

Fiscal Year 2020-21   2020-2021 fiscal period

FTE Staff Years

3.1 FTE staff years   3.1 FTEs

CHAPTER 4
INCLUSION AT WSDOT

WSDOT is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace that represents the communities it serves. We are focusing our efforts to ensure there are fair and equal opportunities to participate in WSDOT employment, contracts and decision making, and that every voice is heard.

Creating accessible documents

- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Section 508
- Accessible Documents
- Accessible Videos
- W3C Web Accessibility Initiative
- Environmental Justice
- Limited English proficiency
- Involving Traditionally Underserved Populations (Transportation Research Board)

Translation Services

If demographic data indicates that 5 percent of the population or more than 1,000 persons within 1/2 mile of your project "speak English less than well," you will need to provide equal access to project information in their language. This may be accomplished by:

- Posting a notice on your project web page in the appropriate language(s).

- Printing and distributing translated project brochures, meeting invitations, and newsletters in the appropriate languages(s). You do not need to translate all of the documents for your project if you have provided a way to people to request that information.

- Providing translator or interpreter services upon request.

Department of Enterprise Services master contracts for translation, interpretive services

The contracts listed below are state mandatory-use contracts. When contracts are negotiated, the state is in principle guaranteeing the supplier a certain amount of business in exchange for the terms set forth in the contract. All aspects of the contract are taken into consideration: price, delivery, service. We are liable for breach of contract when we purchase items from another supplier, unless there are special circumstances.

Master contracts must be used unless you can demonstrate they do not meet a specific need. In that situation, you must note in your purchasing file why the contract did not meet your need and then proceed to obtain a vendor that does meet your needs.

- Communication Access Real Time Translation (captioning), contract # 03116

- Interpreter Services, Spoken, contract # 03514

- Interpreter Services, Telephone, contract # 02819

- Sign Language Interpreter, contract # 03919

- Translation Services, Written Word, contract # 04218

Search for Department of Enterprise Services master contracts

Use the contract search tool to find a contractor or learn about special purchasing programs. Once you identify a contractor vendor on the contract you wish to use, contact the vendor citing the contract number, contract name and customer number. For WSDOT, our customer number is the same as our agency number: 405.

Tactic Graphics, Braille

- Central Washington University - Central Access

Announcements for public meetings and events

News releases announcing a public meeting, open house or other WSDOT hosted public event must include both ADA information and the Title VI statement. The ADA notice provides information on how individuals with disabilities may request accommodation. Title VI states that WSDOT will not discriminate and how individuals may file a complaint if they believe their Title VI protections have been violated.

If you are aware a person with disabilities will be attending a public meeting or event, review WSDOT's Disability Etiquette and Respectful Language Guide.

Title VI and ADA Language for Publications, Communications, and Public Involvement

For publications

English

Title VI Notice to Public

It is the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) policy to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated against under any of its federally funded programs and activities. Any person who believes his/her Title VI protection has been violated, may

file a complaint with WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). For additional information regarding Title V complaint procedures and/or information regarding our non-discrimination obligations, please contact OEO's Title VI Coordinator at 360-705-7090.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information

This material can be made available in an alternate format by emailing the Office of Equal Opportunity at wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov or by calling toll free, 855-362-4ADA(4232). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may make a request by calling the Washington State Relay at 711.

Spanish

Notificación de Titulo VI al Público

Es la póliza de el Departamento de Transportes del Estado de Washington de asegurar que It is the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) policy to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated against under any of its federally funded programs and activities. Any person who believes his/her Title VI protection has been violated, may

file a complaint with WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). For additional information regarding Title V complaint procedures and/or information regarding our non-discrimination obligations, please contact OEO's Title VI Coordinator at 360-705-7090.

Información del Acta Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Este material es disponible en un formato alternative. Envie su petición por correo electrónico al equipo de Oficina de Igualdad de Oportunidades (OEO) en wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov o llamando gratis, 855-362-4ADA (4232). Personas

sordas o con problemas de audición pueden solicitar llamando el relé de estado de Washington al 711.

For public events (like Open Houses, etc)

English

Accommodation requests for people with disabilities can be made by contacting the WSDOT Diversity/ADA Affairs team at wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov or by calling toll-free, 855-362-4ADA (4232). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may make a request by calling the Washington State Relay at 711.

Spanish

Solicitudes de alojamiento para personas con discapacidad pueden hacer comunicándose con el equipo de Asuntos de diversidad/ADA WSDOT en wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov o llamando al número gratuito, 855-362-4ADA (4232). Personas sordas o con problemas de audición pueden solicitar llamando el relé del estado de Washington al 711.

Disability etiquette

A guide to disability etiquette & using respectful language in the workplace

1. **Be Yourself**
   As in any new situation, everyone will feel more comfortable if you relax.

2. **Meeting Someone**
   People who use wheelchairs may have a variety of disabilities. Some have use of their arms and some do not. When you meet someone, extend your hand to shake if that is what you normally do. A person who cannot shake hands will let you know. He or she will appreciate being treated in a normal way. If you are meeting a blind person, identify yourself. If you have met before, remind him of the context; he won't have the visual clues to jog his memory.

3. **Helping**
   Do not automatically give assistance; ask first if the person wants help. Follow the person's cues, and ask if you are not sure. Be the assistant, not the director; let a blind person hold your arm and follow you. And don't be offended if someone refuses your offer of assistance. It's his or her choice to be as independent as they can be.

4. **Communication**
   Talk directly to the person, not to an aide, friend, or interpreter. If the person has a speech impairment, listen carefully and patiently. Ask him to repeat if you don't understand. If the person doesn't understand you when you speak, try again. Don't let him think your communication with him is not worthwhile to you. If the person is deaf or hard of hearing, follow his or her lead; use gestures or write. If the person uses a wheelchair, sit and converse at his level.

5. **Interaction**
   Do not leave a person with a disability out of a conversation or activity because you feel uncomfortable or fear that he/she will feel uncomfortable. Include him or her as you would anyone else. He or she knows what they can do and want to do; let it be their decision whether or not to participate.

6. **Disability**
   Treat the person as an individual. Don't assume that the person's disability is all he can talk about or is interested in.

7. **Environments**
   Be sensitive about the setting. A noisy or dark environment, or people talking simultaneously, might make it difficult for people with a vision, speech, or hearing disability to participate in a conversation. Be aware of clear paths of travel for people who use wheelchairs or are blind. Describe going-on and surroundings (especially obstacles) to blind person.

8. **Touching**
   Do not pet guide dogs, and do not touch a person with a disability unless there is a good reason (such as shaking hands in greeting or if the person has requested assistance). However, you may gently touch a deaf person to get his attention. Never push or operate a person's wheelchair without his or her permission.

9. **Hidden Disabilities**

Not all disabilities are apparent. A person may have trouble following a conversation, may not respond when you call or wave, may make a request that seems strange to you, or may say or do something that seems inappropriate. The person may have a hidden disability, such as low vision, a hearing or learning disability, traumatic brain injury, mental retardation, or mental illness. Don't make assumptions about the person or his or her disability. Be open-minded.

10. **Service Animals**

If the animal provides a disability-related service to a person with a disability, you need to allow the service animal in the workplace. These animals are not pets, so a "no pets" policy does not apply. You can refuse to allow the service animal only if the animal poses an immediate or reasonably foreseeable risk or danger to people or property. Speculation that the animal poses a risk or danger is not enough to refuse the animal. A service animal must be trained, and owners can train their own service animals. Service animals should be under the control of their owners at all times. Service animals should not create sanitary problems or create distractions in the workplace. There are certain very specific types of medical and food service operations where certain animals can be excluded under certain circumstances. There is no requirement that the employer provide food, water, or toileting facilities for service animals.

11. **Learning More**

Lack of knowledge or misinformation may lead you to shy away from interacting with persons with certain disabilities. Preconceptions about mental illness, AIDS, cerebral palsy, Tourettes Syndrome and other disabilities often lead to a lack of acceptance by those around the person. Remember that we are all complex human beings; a disability is just one aspect of a person.

12. **Respectful Language**

RESPECTFUL TERMS	AVOID THESE LABELS
Person with a disability	Handicapped ... Invalid
Individual that has cerebral palsy	Victim ... Afflicted with C.P.
She uses a wheelchair	She is restricted or confined to a wheelchair... wheelchair bound
He is deaf ... does not voice for himself ... nonvocal	He is a deaf mute ... deaf and dumb
She has been disabled since birth	Birth defect
He has a psychiatric disability ... emotional disorder ... mental illness	He is crazy ... insane ... mental patient
My aunt has epilepsy ... seizures	My aunt has fits
He is an employee with a learning disability ... Attention Deficit Disorder	The student is slow ... retarded ... lazy ... stupid ... underachiever
A person without a disability	A normal or healthy person
Steve has a mobility impairment	Steve is crippled and lame
Tonya has quadriplegia	Tonya is a quadriplegic
Accessible parking	Handicapped parking

CHAPTER 5
MEDIA

Media serve as a trusted third-party source of information for many people; one reporter can influence thousands of readers or listeners. At the same time, news media face its own challenges, including fewer resources and more competition. Story coverage often goes to those who know how best to work with reporters and editors. WSDOT's communications team can help agency leaders and subject matter experts acquire the skills, tools and confidence to deliver information in compelling, effective ways when working with the media.

Everyone at WSDOT is a communicator. We talk about our work with colleagues, family, friends, community groups, commuters, people who work for other government agencies and more.

Role of Media

Members of the media want and need information. Whether you cooperate or not, they will most likely produce a story. Being accessible and sensitive to a reporter's need for information and perspective will help generate credibility and create a good working relationship.

Reporters frequently want one of four things:

- Fact check – Verify information or get additional data and perspectives

- Round up – Outreach to WSDOT and other sources to gather comments on certain topics or issues

- Background – Information on how a certain subject and/or situation came about

- Quick quote – reporter wants an expert perspective, generally for a breaking or timely story

Important note: There is no such thing as "off the record." Anything you say can be broadcast live or put on a website live and unedited.

Who should talk to a reporter?

WSDOT's spokesperson for each media interview varies depending upon the situation and who has the needed expertise and abilities. Professional communicators are not the only media spokespersons, nor should they be. In general, it's more interesting and effective for reporters to talk to the WSDOT staff person who is an expert on the topic.

To determine who should appropriately respond to a media question or pitch a story to the media, we consider who has the following:

- The expertise required to respond to reporters' questions knowledgeably and credibly

- The ability to use appropriate strategic messages and provide clear, concise information

- The confidence and poise necessary to speak with the media

- The right time and right location to take advantage of media opportunities

If a reporter contacts you and you're not sure if you're the correct person to respond, please **immediately contact a communications staff member**. Sometimes when we're addressing a highly controversial or sensitive issue, WSDOT managers decide that only a specific person or people are authorized to speak to an issue. When this occurs, all calls should go to the designated spokesperson.

Media Training

In-house media training is available through WSDOT's communications team. Agency managers and subject matter experts who would like to improve their skills and confidence in working with the media should contact the Headquarters Communication Office, 360-705-7075 to discuss their training needs and schedule a workshop.

No Surprises workshop (Risk contingency planning)

This workshop is intended to help project teams develop emergency/high-profile incident communication protocols. They help teams elevate and share information quickly about incidents that generate media attention. Currently offered to Northwest Region staff only. Contact the Northwest Region Communication Manager, 206-440-4698 for more information.

Reporting a Media Contact

Media contact reports are required anytime you speak to a reporter. These daily reports help protect our credibility. Sometimes a reporter or multiple reporters contact different people from the same agency to get information. We undermine our credibility if we don't coordinate and provide information that's consistent, accurate and on-message. Media contact reports are an important step in this coordination.

What to include in a media contact

- Reporter's name and media outlet

- Your name and that of the individual (if different from you) who spoke with the reporter

- Brief description of the topic covered including highlights of the reporter's questions and information you provided in response

- To whom, if anyone, you referred the reporter

- When the story is expected to run or air

- Any follow-up information or contacts required

Where to report a media contact

Send your media contacts by 3 p.m. each day to MediaContacts@wsdot.wa.gov.

Creating News from WSDOT

What is news?

If you have a story to tell, you need to be able to demonstrate what makes your news important, exciting or relevant to your audience today. That's called your news "hook." Your news hook draws in your readers, gets their attention and compels them to continue reading the rest of your story.

Ways to create a news hook

- Highlight something new, unique or emotionally appealing: For example, WSDOT's use of goats to maintain highway right of way capitalized on the "cute factor" and helped promote our agency's sustainable transportation and environmental stewardship.

- Localize a national story: A bridge collapse (or other significant event) in another state often provides an opportunity to talk about what WSDOT does to inspect, repair and preserve our structures. Reporters will appreciate a local angle to a story they will need to cover anyway.

- Nationalize a local story: WSDOT is building a number of large, complex projects; the Grand Opening celebration of the SR 520 floating bridge, which included a Guinness Book of World Records presentation, earned national attention.

- Reinvent a traditional story: Think about holiday stories – reporters get tired of doing the traditional stories and would love to bring a new angle – use this as a "behind the scenes" look at employees who work during the holidays so that others can enjoy them.

- Show and tell with social media: Draw attention to successes of something unique about your project or program. For example, post time-lapse video and a blog about WSDOT contractor crews installing seven, 80-ton concrete girders.

- Use humor or a new twist to a headline: Traffic incidents and highway construction are routine news, but when there's a #Beenado or a #SnoCoSqueeze, a tipped-over semi hauling bees or a project with significant traffic delays might get increased attention.

WSDOT leads media relations for our projects and programs. Consultants and contractors should carefully coordinate with appropriate staff anytime they speak with the media about WSDOT projects.

How do I get my news out?

Work with your program, regional or headquarters communication staff and involve them as soon as possible. It takes time to develop effective communication strategies and craft an action plan to meet your communication goals.

The more advance time you build into your schedule for communication planning, the more likely you'll get good results and succeed at meeting your communication goals.

As a first step – answer these questions and be ready to discuss with your communications staff:

- What's happening?

- When is it happening?

- Where is it happening?

- Why is it important – what will happen if we do, or don't do, this thing?

- How will it affect your audience? Why should they care?

- Who is involved?

- What do we want our audience to do?

- How will you know if you've met your communication goal? What does success look like?

Fact Sheets

Fact sheets can help explain complex subjects to reporters and the general public.

Before you start determine the purpose of your fact sheet. Is it to:

- Inform your audience of something new or changed?

- Explain a complex topic?

- Call to action or solicit feedback?

- Write for your targeted audience

- Who is your primary audience?

- What will they want to know?

- How will they be affected?

Focus on the most important facts

- If there are three things you want most for people to remember, what would they be? Call them out as your key takeaways.

Make it easy to read and understand

- Review the Graphics Style Guide for WSDOT branding guidance

- Create a headline that explains the subject of the page

- Use subheads to allow for scanning, group related information

- Keep to one page if at all possible – include key facts: funding, dimensions, weights, etc.

- Make it readable, use 12-point font

- Use plain language, avoid jargon and unfamiliar acronyms

- Use comparisons and analogies to describe complicated issues or practices – for example: Rocks the size of a bus blocked the snow plow's path.

- Include graphs, photos and icons to convey information more efficiently and effectively, and to better engage readers

- Include a date (month/year)

Include contact information

- Name and title

- Email address

- Phone number

- URL of Web resources relevant to your topic

Advertising considerations

If WSDOT is approached by an external entity soliciting advertisement from the agency, that solicitation will be reviewed carefully by HQ Communications Office to:

- Confirm alignment with current department priorities.

- Confirm an established need for paid advertisement by the department.

- Confirm alignment of the type of advertisement with the type of proposed media to target audiences.

- Use limited agency resources wisely.

- Protect the WSDOT brand and agency credibility regarding use of taxpayer dollars for paid advertisement.

CHAPTER 6
SOCIAL MEDIA

WSDOT has the most robust social media presence among DOTs in the nation. Using our multiple social media platforms allows us to provide consistent, reliable information about projects, safety and the state of the agency to the hundreds of thousands of people who follow our accounts. Responsive and creative communications on our social sites also helps the public feel more connected to the agency.

This best practices document on the use of social media expands upon the Executive Order 1089 for Social Media Use for all employees within the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) on the use of social media sites.

Purpose

WSDOT compiled these best practices to assist staff when working with social media in official, professional or personal capacities. Social media offers the opportunity to interact with the public and employees in new and dynamic ways that facilitate transparency, interactivity and collaboration. These tools engage populations differently than traditional media and enhance existing communication strategies.

Best practices with social media. WSDOT uses social media for agency business purposes as a way to offer opportunities for outreach, information sharing and interaction. These best practices provide general information about the culture of social media and how to be a good citizen of the social media environment.[1] WSDOT staff who are engaged with social media should educate themselves about effective, responsible and safe use of these tools.

Types of use of social media

This document addresses three distinct uses of social media and provides guidelines for each:

- **Official use.** Official use of social media is defined as use of social media as an authorized component of an employee's WSDOT job duties. Examples of this would be authorized tweeting on behalf of WSDOT Twitter account, posting content to WSDOT's Flickr, blog, YouTube and Facebook accounts.

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[1]   This document's content is adapted from the Attorney General's Office Social Media Best Practices, Guidelines and Best Practices for Social Media Use in Washington State, which in turn adapted content from IBM Social Computing Guidelines, State of Utah Social Media Guidelines and the Washington State Bar Association Social Media Guidelines.

- **Professional use at work.** Employee's professional use of social media only for approved business purposes, including professional networking, to support the agency's mission provided the WSDOT policies are followed. Employees may occasionally be asked by WSDOT or the Governor's office to participate in online forums to express their personal views or opinions. Participation in those forums is considered to be for official state purpose and an employee may use work time and/or state agency owned equipment to participate.

- **Personal use of social media at or outside of work.** Personal use of social media is defined as social media use on an account registered to an individual and their personal (non-WSDOT) email address that is not for WSDOT business purposes. Personal use of social media is NOT ALLOWED on WSDOT work time, equipment or resources.

Related policies

Employees are required to follow applicable WSDOT policies, including EO 1021 Employee Use of Electronic Communication Systems and Information Technology Manual - Chapter 960.09 Internet Monitoring/Filtering/ Blocking Procedures.

Definitions

See Definitions located located in EO 1089 Social Media Use.

Basic social media principles

These principles are universal when using social media officially, professionally or personally.

Be aware: communication via social media is powerful. Social media tools allow information to be communicated almost instantly to a broad audience, perhaps literally around the world.

- Communication via social media (for example on Facebook) is often not anonymous. Privacy settings may not create the level of privacy intended and even "anonymous" posts may not actually be or truly remain anonymous.

- Communications via social media are recorded and widely available for an indefinite length of time.

Be responsible. Be responsible for material posted. At times employees may use social media for official or professional agency business purposes; however, employees may be perceived by others as speaking on behalf of WSDOT regardless of intent or authority to do so. Carefully consider content and how it may be perceived. What is published will be accessible for some time and, in some cases, indefinitely.

Communication via social media is often not anonymous.
Make sure you check and update your social media privacy settings.

Be honest and transparent. Honesty – or dishonesty – will be quickly noticed in the social media environment. Don't communicate under anyone else's name or photo. Don't use fake names. If social media use is an authorized component of an employee's WSDOT job duties, use the WSDOT logo.

Correct errors quickly. If a mistake is made, admit it. Be upfront and quickly provide the correct information. If appropriate, modify an earlier post to make it clear that the error has been corrected. If an employee makes a mistake using a WSDOT social media account, a supervisor should be notified.

Be respectful. When disagreeing with others' opinions, keep it appropriate and polite. Do not use defamatory or libelous language or engage in damaging innuendo. Do not use abusive, threatening, offensive, obscene, explicit or racist language.

Be relevant and add value. The best way to get content read is to contribute information that people value. Social communication from agencies should help citizens, partners and co-workers. It can be thought-provoking and should build a sense of community. If social

communication helps people improve knowledge or skills, build their businesses, do their jobs, solve problems, or understand the state better, then it is adding value.

Be conversational. When communicating via social media, use the same approach that one would use when talking to a person on the phone. Bring in personality to personalize the voice/tone of the agency. Use plain language and avoid using government jargon or acronyms. Consider content that is open-ended and invites responses. Encourage comments. Broaden the conversation by referring to others who are commenting about the same topic and allowing content to be shared or syndicated. When shortening words to save space, utilize commonly used shorthand.

Abide by social media provider rules. By joining a particular social network or service, an employee agrees to abide by that provider's terms of service, so review those terms carefully and run them by our agency's Assistant Attorney General as needed.

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE
- Official use
- Professional use at work
- Personal use of social media at or outside work

If you have social media accounts and identify yourself as a WSDOT employee, you may be contacted directly by a member of the media. If that happens, refer them to WSDOT Communications.

Official use of social media

All agency-related communication through social media should be conducted in accordance with all applicable WSDOT policies, practices and expectations. Wherever possible, consider the following:

Authorization. Employees should not participate on social media websites or other online forums on behalf of WSDOT unless authorized to do so by the agency Communications Director. If a division or office would like to request a new social media tool, send an email to the agency Communications Director that includes: the name of the requestor, the office or program name, the social tool requested, reason(s) for the request and a justification for why this tool should be added to our current social media tool set.

Confidentiality. Whether using social media for agency business purpose or for personal use, employees should not post or release proprietary, confidential, sensitive, or personally identifiable information or state government intellectual property. Social networking and social media are not an appropriate forum for any type of confidential communications. Employees using social media should also be aware of and adhere to State Information Technology Security Standards. See the Office of the Chief Information Officer's State Technology Manual, Section 141 and RCW 42.52.050 regarding confidential information in the State Ethics Law.

Links. Employees should take extra care in posting links. For example, consider possible ramifications or perceptions in light of the intended use when posting links to commercial sites on behalf of WSDOT. Sharing or posting links that support/oppose ballot measures or initiatives or are associated with political purposes/campaigns are prohibited due to state ethics law. Linking to an outside company website could be perceived as promoting its products or services and could also violate state ethics law.

Identify yourself clearly. When creating social media accounts that require individual identification and when posting or exchanging information on social media forums, authorized users speaking on behalf of the agency should identify themselves by: 1) Full Name; 2) Title; 3) Agency/Division; and 4) Contact Information, if possible.

Employee privacy. WSDOT monitors Internet usage on its network. Furthermore, there should be no expectation of privacy when publishing information via social media concerning the agency.

Understand first amendment rights. Although WSDOT can moderate social media sites that accept comments from the public (such as Facebook and blogs) to restrict speech that is obscene, threatening, discriminatory, harassing, or off topic, we cannot use the moderation function to restrict speech with which WSDOT merely disagrees (e.g. subject matter restrictions). Users have First Amendment rights in posting content to public social media sites hosted by state agencies. Moderators must respect those rights by posting all comments other than those excluded for specific legitimate reasons, such as those identified in WSDOT's Terms of Comment. When in doubt, consult the department's Assistant Attorney General.

Don't feed the rumor mill. Employees should merely say, "No comment" to rumors. Do not deny or affirm them—or suggest either denial or affirmation in subtle ways.

Handling negative comments. The purpose of many social media sites is to engage and get feedback from the public. One should expect that some of the feedback received will be negative. Some effective ways to respond to negative comments include:

- Providing accurate information
- Respectfully disagree
- Acknowledge that it is possible to hold different points of view

Stick to your area of expertise. Provide a unique, individual perspective. Post meaningful, respectful comments that inform, educate and engage citizens. Do not just repost press releases. If employees get questions on topics that aren't in their area of expertise, make every effort to contact the content owner for clarification before responding. Example from Guidelines and Best Practices for Social Media Use in Washington State: An environmental agency might post information it has developed regarding endangered species, share information from other sources about natural resources, or comment on another source's information on carbon footprints, but wouldn't post information about licensing foster homes.

Handling media inquiries. WSDOT social media identities may lead to increased inquiries from the media. If an employee is contacted directly by a reporter, refer media questions to WSDOT Communications.

Respect proprietary information or content and confidentiality. WSDOT must own or have a clear right to use all content that is published. Always give people credit for their work. Make sure WSDOT has the right to use material (text, photos, etc.) with attribution before publishing. It is a good practice to link to others' work rather than reproducing it on our site. If posting photos or videos, be sure to have people in the photo or video (including agency staff) sign a release or ensure that a signed video and photo release is currently on file.

Respond quickly. When a response is appropriate, reply to comments in a timely manner. Be sure to have enough staff time to review comments on a regular basis and have identified one or more individuals who are authorized to respond on behalf of the agency.

Keep social media use in perspective. Agency business use of social media, including professional networking, should further WSDOT's mission and values. If an employee is authorized to use social media as part of their job duties, be sure use meets your supervisor's expectations and is targeted to those duties.

Professional use of social media

Permitted use. Staff may use social networking for approved state business purposes, including professional networking, to support the agency's mission provided they follow WSDOT'S Social Media Use Executive Order Use of social networking for personal purposes is not permitted when using state resources (which includes but isn't limited to time, equipment, and contact lists). Employees may occasionally be asked by WSDOT or the Governor's office to participate in online forums to express their personal views or opinions. Participation in those forums is considered to be for official state purpose and an employee may use work time and/or state agency owned equipment to participate

Recognize that professional opinions may be interpreted as an agency policy or position. Make clear when possible that opinions do not necessarily reflect that of WSDOT. For example, employees should use this disclaimer on personal and professional social media accounts: "The views and opinions expressed on this site are my own alone and may not represent the views of my employer."

In addition:

- Know and follow all applicable WSDOT policies.

- Be aware of and follow any other applicable laws or rules, such as state ethics laws and rules, the terms of service of social media providers, and intellectual property laws.

- If an employee uses a personal account (e.g. LinkedIn) to participate in a professional networking group for WSDOT business, this may make their content on the social media site subject to discovery in the event of litigation or a public disclosure request.

- Use of professional networking sites to search for jobs is allowed when an employee has been authorized by HR and the employee has received an at-risk letter indicating that approval.

- Be careful of links on networking sites. Some links found on social media sites will spread viruses or malware. Contact IT Support if a questionable link is clicked.

Determining personal vs. professional and official use

Please refer to the agency policy for definitions of official, professional and personal use of social media tools. The examples below illustrate these definitions.

- A WSDOT employee uses LinkedIn to locate resources for a topic being considered for an upcoming continuing education credit. This use supports WSDOT's mission and is permissible using state resources.

Q: Can I look at WSDOT's Twitter and Facebook accounts while at work?

A: Yes, you can. However, you cannot log-in to your personal Twitter or Facebook account to do so. WSDOT's Facebook posts and tweets are viewable without having to log-in.

Q: Is it okay for me to watch WSDOT's YouTube channel while at work?

A: Yes, you can! In moderation, of course.

Q: Am I allowed to use social media on my personal device while on a 15-minute break or during my lunch break?

A: Yes, you can! While doing so, please consider the items to the left.

- A WSDOT employee uses LinkedIn to search for employment opportunities outside of the agency. This use is for the benefit of the individual employee, not the agency, and is thus prohibited as it is considered a personal use of social media.

Personal use of social media

This section pertains primarily to the personal, off-duty use of social media. Remember that personal use of social media is NOT ALLOWED on WSDOT work time, equipment or resources.

These best practices **do not constitute agency policy**, but provide general information about the culture of social media and how to be a good citizen of the social media environment. The goal is to educate and provide employees with suggestions on how to avoid pitfalls when using social media outside of work.

Social media is just another platform on which various communications occur. As a WSDOT employee, be aware that statements and postings on social media may implicate professional ethical obligations or compliance with WSDOT policies. Social networking generally does not allow anonymity. Even if comments on personal social networking sites are restricted to selected contacts ("friends"), this information can sometimes be accessed by others, or can be captured by a contact and passed on. Similarly, comments that have been deleted may continue to exist in backup files or elsewhere.

Employees' personal use should not be attributable to WSDOT or to the employee's job function at WSDOT. An employee's use and comments made on a social media site are subject to First Amendment protections. However, personal use of social media sites while at work (for example during break periods) on the employee's personal device, must be conducted in such a manner that a reader would not think that the employee is speaking for or on behalf of his or her agency employer.

Remember that personal social networking using state resources is not permitted.

Must be in compliance with relevant portions of workplace policies, laws and regulations. Employees' use of social media must be in compliance with WSDOT's relevant policies, including its harassment and discrimination policies, confidentiality policies, ethics rules, code of conduct, and other policies, as well as with state Ethics Law, Federal Copyright law, and other applicable laws and regulations.

Must not be excessive. Excessive, personal use of social media on personal devices during work hours may result in discipline or termination.

Things to remember

- As public servants, employees are under a microscope.

- A bad social media misstep can result in front page news or the loss of a job.

- Conduct or language that would be unacceptable in another forum is similarly unacceptable on personal media sites. For example, divulging confidential information, or using derogatory language based on a person's race, gender or other protected status that would be unacceptable in person, is similarly unacceptable on personal social media sites.

- Don't be misled by the casualness of social media contacts.

- Consider using one networking site for professional contacts and another for social activities, if allowed by the terms of service. Keep title and work information off of social media sites.

- Be aware of perceptions created by "friends".

- Remember that humor (particularly sarcasm and satire) often do not work online. For every person who gets the joke, there will be 10 people who don't and are offended.

- Be aware of geotagging, location metadata indicating the time and location where photographs were taken. Also, some social media applications track location. Stay aware and consider possible consequences of this.

- Be aware that personal updates on personal social sites made during working hours – such as on a mobile device - may convey the perception of inappropriate behavior.

Know the tools

Social media is messy. Across Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and other social networks, we are connected to a mix of family, close friends, college buddies, high school classmates, co-workers, bosses, former bosses and acquaintances. It's important to understand the particular platform being used.

Each social media platform has a certain reputation or focus. For instance, LinkedIn is generally a business site, while Twitter is more "laid back" or open and users may mix professional and personal content.[2]

Respect the way that people use these sites. Although use of Facebook Pages by business and government is widespread, adding a professional acquaintance as a friend on Facebook can be invasive, especially if that individual is a traditionalist who uses Facebook purely for personal contact with friends and family. Likewise, asking an old friend for a recommendation on LinkedIn might create awkwardness if the person has no experience with you in a professional capacity.

Tips for specific social media tools

Facebook

- Be familiar with Facebook's terms of service. All or some of the following may apply to use:
    - Statement of Rights and Responsibilities (these are the standard terms that apply to individual accounts)
    - The additional Pages Terms
    - Amended Pages Terms for State and Local Governments in the United States
    - Other terms or policies may also apply, such as the Privacy Policy or Facebook Principles

- Facebook changes its terms and functionality frequently and may do so without notice to users. Such changes may or may not affect use, but employees are responsible for that use and for compliance with the applicable terms.

- Under Facebook's terms, only one account can be created for each individual although one can associate additional email addresses with an account. Any use of a WSDOT email address must be for agency business purposes only.

- Keep any official state pages separate from personal pages.

- Allow comments to create two-way conversation; interactive Facebook pages are more effective. At the same time, be aware of any records retention, public disclosure, or first amendment/public orum issues that comments might raise and consult with the appropriate assistant attorney general when warranted.

- Post a comment policy that establishes appropriate limitations. Be prepared to moderate the comments and reserve the right to delete inappropriate content in accordance with the posted comment policy and the Public Records Act. In addition, commenters should be reminded that all comments are subject to public disclosure. Consult with the appropriate assistant attorney general on how to accomplish these tasks.

Twitter

- Tweets are limited to 140 characters, but ideally should be shorter to allow others to re-tweet without having to remove some of the original content.

- Use a URL shortener/tracker such as tiny.url, bitly, or Twitter's own tool to save space and also to count "click-throughs," a way of measuring the number of times a site or page has been accessed.

- Consider selectively following back those who follow your Twitter account, except if they have an inappropriate photo or tweets.

- Re-tweet other users' tweets when the content is relevant and may be of interest to followers.

- Thank those who re-tweet tweets with an at reply (@ reply).

- Use hashtags (#) when appropriate to make tweets more searchable.

- Respond quickly to direct messages (those that aren't spam).

YouTube

- Obtain and keep on file a signed video and photo release for any non-agency staff in the video. Depictions of children require a release from a parent or guardian; in general, depictions of children should be avoided.

- Follow all applicable copyright laws.

- Use terms in the title, description and key word sections to make video more searchable.

- To spread content to the widest possible audience, embed video on other sites.

Blogs

- Be clear about who is posting each post.

- Use hyperlinks to link to more information as appropriate; consider posting a disclaimer regarding any linked content.

- Allow comments to create a two-way conversation; interactive blogs are more interesting. At the same time, be aware of any records retention, public disclosure, or first amendment/public forum issues that comments might raise.

- Post a comment policy that establishes appropriate limitations for a "forum". Be prepared to moderate the comments and reserve the right to delete inappropriate content in accordance with the posted comment policy and the Public Records Act. In addition, commenters should be reminded that all comments are subject to public disclosure. Consult with the appropriate assistant attorney general on how to accomplish these tasks.

- Post regularly to build credibility and keep content fresh.

Best practices for specific social media tools

Twitter best practices

Twitter continues to be our best way of getting information out quickly to a wide audience. We have the two most-followed accounts about DOTs in the country and are seeing strong growth with other accounts. With more than 500,000 followers across all our accounts, we are a go-to source of information not just locally but across the country.

Twitter Tips

- **Post consistently:** We need consistent content to give people a reason to follow us. Some accounts will post more than others, but every account should be active daily.

- **Post Timely:** Post content to Twitter before releasing it anywhere else. If a news agency tweets it first, we lose the opportunity to tell our story

- **But be careful!** It is possible to tweet too much! On particularly bad traffic days, for example, be careful not to flood people's feed with information. Figure out what's important for them to know and how to update them without overdoing it. You can also tweet too much in an hour, which locks you out of Twitter for a few hours.

- **Understand timing:** When are most people online? Early in the morning before work. At lunch. In the evening after work. Many of our followers use mobile devices to access social media so we can reach people on transit during the AM and PM commutes.

- **Pay attention to what's happening:** There are times when it's better to be quiet and not tweet anything at all, out of respect for current events. Pause a bit to see if there's anything happening before sending information out, especially jokes.

- **Images rule:** If you can include pictures or videos with your tweets, it will have a greater reach and get more of a response. Images draw more eyes than plain text.

- **Know your images:** Memes and GIFs are great to use to draw eyes. But know the story or background of what you're using. Do they make sense in your context? Is there anything controversial about them that may bite you? Research them if you don't know.

- **Be personable:** Twitter feeds should have a voice. Let people know it's a real person behind the screen. Be yourself and people will connect because it's authentic.

- **Stay in your comfort zone:** Don't tweet about things you don't know about, because you'll make mistakes. If you don't know sports, don't force it, find something that you're comfortable with.

- **Stay in your lane:** Each Twitter account has its own purpose. Work together, but don't stray outside your account's purpose. Otherwise that makes those other accounts pointless.

- **Be responsive:** The key to good social media is being social. We want people to continue to come back to us for information and that means being responsive to their comments/questions, as quickly as possible. If you can't find an answer quickly, let them know you're looking into it and will get back to them ASAP.

- **Remember your audience:** So many people use social from a mobile device. Keep that in mind when crafting your content. Keep it short but include the most important info. If you're linking to a blog or a webpage, don't say "Click this blog", "Check out this webpage," etc. Don't force them to click out of the context of Twitter to read the message you want them to get.

- **Hashtags:** Hashtags are an important way to engage in a conversation, but use them intelligently. They don't need to be in every post and shouldn't just be used to jump into a conversation. If you must use one, pick a hashtag that makes sense that will help push the content out. Using hashtags that are trending (news jacking) can sometimes gain you a larger audience, but is it your target audience? Newsjack wisely. Doing this too often can be seen as desperate.

- **Tag smart:** Tagging other accounts can help expand your reach and connect with an important demographic. Is there a sports team, venue, artist, agency, that you can use to leverage your content in a way that makes sense?

- **Add value:** We're known for our humor and creativity but don't be funny just to be funny. How can you be funny or creative within the context of our goals?

- **Re-Tweeting:** Re-Tweeting is a great way to support other accounts while also expanding your potential follow numbers. But be smart. Re-Tweet important info that your followers may find useful.

- **Quote Re-Tweets:** Using the quote Re-Tweet option is a good way to add your spin to a tweet or to add context to a Tweet that makes it relevant to your audience.

- **Each Tweet is its own Tweet:** Remember that each tweet exists on its own. Don't assume that because you tweeted about something earlier and are following up on it, that people saw the first tweet. Always provide needed context.

- **Shorten links:** It's always a good idea to use Bit.ly to shorten links to blogs or webpages. It saves a large amount of space that you can use to provide context to the link.

- **Lists are great!** You can make lists on Twitter that allow you to easily follow groupings of other accounts. For example, you can make a WSDOT list to follow other agency accounts to easily stay updated on what they're talking about.

- **Polling:** Polls on Twitter can be an easy way to engage people and get feedback, but have a plan on what to do with the results of the poll. What's the point?

- **Follow people back:** Are there people who regularly provide value to your account? Let you know about crashes? Ask good questions? Regularly engage? Consider following them back. It's a nice thing to do and encourages them to keep reaching out to you.

Instagram best practices

Instagram is a mobile photo-sharing app, which, unlike other social networking sites, is completely photo/video centric, allowing us the freedom to use pictures and video to tell our story.

1. **Be mobile:** The only way to use Instagram is via mobile device, so you'll need to download the app to your mobile.

2. **Don't flood your feed:** Posting 1 or 2 times a day is sufficient. Otherwise, it just becomes noise.

3. **But be consistent:** Give people a reason to follow you. They want to know you'll have consistent content.

4. **Flickr vs. Instagram:** They are similar. If you have several pictures you want to post to tell a story, Flickr is your best bet. If you have one great picture that tells a story, Instagram might be the better choice.

5. **Let the picture do the talking:** While we can and should add some text context to the picture, the picture should tell much of the story. If nothing else, it should be visually captivating.

6. **Hashtags:** Hashtags can help tell the story of the picture and capture more eyes, but be sure the hashtag you're using makes sense and is relevant to your content. Do a search for the hashtag and see what it's already being used for. And don't overdo hashtag use.

7. **Picture quality:** Keep in mind that people are viewing your Instagram on mobile mostly, so be sure the quality of the picture is clear and easy to view. There are many filter choices so check to see that the photo is as clear as possible.

8. **Be responsive:** Responsiveness has been the key to our social media success. Monitor any comments on your posts and respond as quickly as possible. Let people know they are interacting with real people.

9. **Tag**, you're it: Similar to Twitter, you have to use the @ symbol in order for the person you're engaging with to get notice that you've responded to them.

10. **Linking:** You can't link on Instagram except in the description of who you are (not on any photos). So that would be the place to direct people to a blog or website.

11. **Collages:** Sometimes a collage can work well to tell a story but be aware that the pictures will be smaller so must be clear and work together well to tell the story.

Facebook Live best practices

Before going live on Facebook, ask yourselves these questions in formulating your plan:

- What do you plan to talk about?

- Why does Facebook Live make sense for this? Would a different platform work better?

- Who will be involved (on camera, holding the camera, etc.).

- Where will you do it? Does it have good reception? Have you tested it?

- What time will you air? Be as specific as possible so you can alert the public to tune in.

- Will you be using a microphone and/or tripod?

- Are there visuals you'll be using?

- What are your pans for post-Facebook Live (monitoring comments/answering questions, etc.)?

Tips for using Facebook Live

- **Be prepared**

  - Unless this is an absolute emergency, there's no need to wing it. Have your plan ready.

  - Be sure you have a strong connection. Check it well in advance, if possible, so you aren't surprised. Have a backup phone available, if possible, as some services can get a signal where others can't.

- **Technical issues to consider**

  - Hold the phone vertically. If you hold it sideways (in landscape) the video will be sideways.

  - Speak louder than you think you need to speak, even if you're using a mic.

  - Be sure your phone ringer and any other cellphone ringers nearby are turned off.

  - Be aware of ambient noise (traffic, air conditioning, phones ringing, people talking, etc.). Is there a better spot you can locate to? It's fun doing Facebook Live outside, but be aware of surroundings.

  - How is the lighting? Are you in shadow? Is your graphic in shadow? Is it too bright?

  - If you're going to be fairly stationary, consider using a tripod.

- **Practice first**

  - Write a compelling description before going live. What are people going to hear about?

  - You can practice without going live by setting the "Who Should See This" privacy setting to "Only Me." Film it, check the video and sound quality, etc. If nothing else, rehearse what you plan to say beforehand.

  - Have someone familiar with the story you're trying to tell film you. They can help guide the broadcast and are better equipped to know what to film and when.

  - Have someone watching the broadcast who is able to communicate with you or the filmer if the sound or video quality is off.

- **And, ACTION!**

  - Personality. Be yourself. Be engaging. Smile. This isn't 60 Minutes.

  - Introduce yourself, where you're from and what you're talking about. Encourage comments/feedback and encourage people to share the video when you're done.

  - Acknowledge people by name who are asking questions/commenting. It helps build a connection and encourages more people to engage.

  - Use a closing line so people know when the broadcast is ending. Thank them for tuning in.

  - Facebook has found that the most popular FB Lives last about 10 minutes, which seems long in a day when we know attention spans can be short. Don't be afraid to tell your story thoroughly. Speak clearly, don't rush through it.

  - Consider doing a short synopsis of what was talked about in the comments section. Remember that some Facebook users are deaf or hearing impaired and this will help them know the key points. It will also help people who don't have the time/interest to watch the entire video.

  - Keep in mind that the media can and will use sound clips from your Facebook Lives. While keeping it engaging, also be sure that you come across as professional.

  - Despite all your planning and testing, things can go wrong. Facebook can be a strange beast with a mind of its own sometimes. Don't get discouraged, learn from mistakes and keep trying.

  - Stay engaged on the Facebook post as questions/comments continue to roll in after the broadcast is over.

Blog best practices

Blogs are a way for us to tell a story in a more robust and deeper way than our other social media channels allow. It allows for creative and longer-form story telling in which we can delve deeper into an emerging issue or introduce the public to an aspect of the agency they may not be familiar with. It also gives us an anchor point with which to disperse important information on our other social channels that may not allow the space to fully explain an issue.

Writing tips:

- **Be creative:** These are not press releases. Tell a story, have a conversation with your reader. Describe. Paint a picture. Be engaging and give the reader a reason to dive in and learn more.

- **Use your voice:** We all have our own writing voice, and none of them sound like a dry newscast. Use your unique way of writing to capture the reader's attention.

- **But write well:** Be creative, but do so within good writing. Don't use slang. Write clearly, in complete sentences, using AP Style, in a way that's easy to read.

- **Never WSDOT:** With very, very few exceptions, "WSDOT" shouldn't be in our blogs. Use "we," "us," "our," etc.

- **Think statewide:** Our blog is seen statewide, unlike our specific Twitter accounts. Think of how you can make your story relevant to a statewide audience whenever possible.

- **Limit quotes:** There's usually no place in a blog for quotes. If you've used sources for your story, paraphrase whenever possible. Write what the quote said and add depth to it rather than quoting directly.

- **Avoid jargon:** Much of what we write about is technical, or a different world from the average reader. It's your job to explain, make it simple, reach the average reader so they aren't left wondering, "What?"

- **Run it by subject experts:** Is your blog piece technical? Does it involve a subject you aren't sure about? It's always a good idea to run your completed story by a subject expert so they can check your facts and make sure everything is correct before it goes to final editing.

- **Link carefully:** Links can be helpful but we want to be careful about sending people to another spot for information so use them judiciously. Is there something specific to the link that you can include in your story instead?

Using visuals:

- **Images rule:** A picture is worth 1,000 words, right? So, let's use them! Find a few good images that work well with your story. No need to flood the blog with pictures, but two to four solid images go a long way in helping to tell the story.

- **But make them compelling:** There are places for maps/graphs/charts, etc. Some blogs absolutely need them. But they aren't very interesting. Use real pictures as well whenever possible and limit use of maps, etc. unless it's a must.

- **Videos can help:** If you've got a short clip or two that can flesh out the story, it can go a long way toward making your story sing. This would be a great place to post a quick interview (rather than using quotes) or showing something that may be tough to describe.

- **But be sure videos meet the video standards:** Work with Web Help to be sure any videos used are matching our standards, including using WSDOT intro/outro and logos.

- **Get your images vetted:** Be sure to send any images you want to use through the safety department first to be sure there are no concerns.

- **Send art separately:** When submitting your blog to the editor, be sure to send your pictures/videos as separate attachments.

- **Help the editor out:** Please include caption information for pictures and headline suggestions if possible.

Getting your blog posted:

- **No surprises:** As soon as you have a blog idea, loop in the social media lead to help develop the idea and get it on the content calendar.

- **Have a plan:** How will people find out about your blog? Will you Tweet it? Post it to Facebook? Is it worth posting to Reddit? What makes sense, when, and why?

- **Be responsive:** We don't typically get a lot of comments on blogs, but when we do it's important to be responsive and get back to the person as quickly as possible.

COMMUNICATIONS MANUAL

Records retention and public records

Please refer to the agency policy for guidance regarding agency records retention and public records practices.

References and useful links

- Governor's Office – Guidelines and Best Practices for Social Media Use in Washington State
- Twitter for Educational Purposes
- Corporate Blogging: 7 Best Practices
- The Social Network that Gets Down to Business, New York Times, Sept. 29, 2010 (LinkedIn)
- Intel Social Media Guidelines
- Designing Social Media Policy for Government, Center for Technology & Government, Sept. 2010
- Facebook – principles, rights and responsibilities

CHAPTER 7
WEB COMMUNICATION

WSDOT's website averages 165,000 user sessions per day. More than half of those user sessions are from a mobile phone or tablet. To better serve the needs of our customers in the way they use our information, we've developed standards and guidelines for website consistency.

The Web Toolkit provides training and guidance for creating and editing WSDOT's web content.

Design and maintain a user-centered website

Think about your visitor

People visit the WSDOT website to:

1. Complete a task

2. Get answers to a problem or question

All content on the WSDOT website should be in response to the needs of our visitors. To do that, we first need to know what it is and why they need it in order to quickly provide the content.

Web Help provides personal assistance for most web issues on the WSDOT internal and external websites

How do I know who uses my site?

- By who calls or emails your office for particular items
- Who your office has historically served in the past
- Google Analytics: can show where visitors go on the site
- CrazyEgg: tracks where visitors click and scroll on a certain page

What happens if we skip this step?

Visitors to your website remember negative experiences. Every bit of online content WSDOT provides reflects on the agency as a whole.

Bad content makes visitors feel:

- Like they should give up
- Unwilling to return

- You're being disrespectful of their time
- Like their problems aren't priorities

Card sorting exercise

Talk it over with your team or set up a time for a Web Help team member to go through the exercise with you.

1. Write down everything users come to your site to do on Post It notes. Lay them all on the table.

2. Think about the connections and if certain visitors would do the same thing such as looking at standard plans.

3. Are there any tasks users should be able to do but can't on the current site? Write those down and add them to your card spread.

4. Put these actions into the group that make sense. Ensure we are providing visitors with ways to complete their top tasks

Have a hierarchy begin with the most used

Choose the top five tasks of your visitors and focus on those. If visitors aren't using content, then it shouldn't be online.

Long lists of links to every portion of the site do not help users. Instead, think of guiding them toward the things they need, such as separating content by user group or separating your content into groups, such as all the training materials in one place.

Breaking up ideas

Make it scannable

Website visitors read in an F pattern -– starting with the first letter in the first sentence and jumping down the left side, then over again. Write the first sentence and line of every paragraph to capture readers' attention and lead them to what they are looking for. We want people to spend fewer than two minutes on each page.

Headings

Keep paragraphs close to their headings to make it easy to scan. Keep paragraphs close to their headings to make it easy to scan. Try to "front-load" headings, putting the most important information first. This makes it easier for people and search engines to quickly find information. Avoid question headings and FAQs – these make pages harder to skim and they cannot be front-loaded for usability.

There are four header types:

1. **Action-focused**
   Ex: Sign a contract

2. **Noun-focused**
   Ex: Lane striping

3. **Statements**
   Ex: WSDOT is in charge of our highways

Lists

People can easily scan these if you:

1. Use bulleted lists for items or choices

2. Use numbered lists for instructions

3. Put space between each line in your lists

4. Aim for no more than 5 bullets in each list

5. Avoid using tables, as they are not easily accessible for visitors using a screen reader

Order

Similar content in different places makes it difficult for visitors to know which version is correct. Keeping similar information in one place also makes it easy for content managers to update.

Links

Write links that lead people to where they want to go. Match the page title with the hyperlinked text so there are no surprises.

Using active voice

Visitors can easily scan sentences written in active voice. This means putting the subject doing the action at the start of the sentence. Active voice makes it easy to quickly follow along with who is acting upon what.

Passive: Writing for the web should be in active voice.

Active: You should use active voice when writing for the web.

*You (**the noun**) should use (**verb**) active voice when writing for the web.*

Active: Customers want their problems solved quickly.

Customers (noun) want (verb) their problem solved quickly.

Active: Content managers plan before making a new page.

Word Choice

Use plain talk whenever you can to make content easy to understand and navigate for all visitors. Avoid using acronyms or technical terms if a better choice is available. You are not "dumbing down" the content, but simply making it easier to scan.

You can often find a simpler word:

Avoid	Try
Factual	true
Commence	start or begin
Utilize	use
Transmit	send
Efficient	able

Graphics

Only use graphics that are instantly recognizable and necessary. Images should be small in size to download quickly. People like pictures of other people. Images should not be used to "break up text." Use bullets, headings and space to avoid walls of text that are difficult to quickly scan. Infographics are difficult to make accessible – consult with a member of the Web Team before including an infographic on your web page.

Guidelines

Follow our approved guidelines to maintain cohesion throughout the site with colors, fonts and design. See our most recent guidelines or templates for more information.

Design and maintain a user-centered website

Content Strategy

All content published to the web must go through the same process as every other communication WSDOT shares. Know who is going to be in charge of writing, editing and creating graphics or photos. Ensure everyone is already trained to do their part in the process.

Content must be:

- **Planned:** know who your audience is and why this should be put online
- **Reviewed:** write up a website plan of exactly how the page will look and ensure you are providing answers for our visitors
- **Created:** put the plans onto the page and have another review cycle
- **Maintain:** choose one person in charge of one page, if that person leaves then you must hand over authority to someone else
- **Removed** once no longer needed: out-of-date content should be deleted or updated immediately

You are in charge of managing the page by:

- Receiving the proper training for page management

- Putting one person in charge of the page at all times

- Creating a maintenance schedule to regularly update content and remove anything out of date

- Ensuring frequently updated content is in as few places as possible

- Updating content as need be

Webpage Standards

1. **Look and feel**

   - All WSDOT webpages and applications will have the standard header and footer

   - All pages should be consistent with a header, footer and left navigation menu

   - The privacy policy and copyright should be on the footer of every WSDOT webpage

   - All pages must use the WSDOT stylesheet and have consistent fonts and sizing

   - No links to pdf files or documents in the related links sectionr

   - Right column should only be used for secondary information and only if absolutely necessary, do not include primary information on the page in the right column

   - Always ensure there is a sense of place on any page created

2. **Content**

   - All content should be created with the user in mind.

   - Content must be structured so users can complete a task

   - Users read in an "F" pattern, help them find the content they are looking for while reading in that pattern

   - All content must be written in an active voice

   - There are no office pages on the external website. Everything should be organized by subject and each page should have unique content and labeled as such.

   - Anything you put on the web should be easily scannable and written in plain talk. All paragraphs should have headings. Everything on our website should be clear to someone who isn't an expert in the subject it covers.

   - Write out all acronyms on first reference.

   - Any list of items more than three long should be bulleted

   - No bulleted list should have more than five items

   - Clearly label contacts and why they should be contacted. Do not list everyone in your office on any contact page.

   - If your content is getting less than 500 views over a six-month period it should be removed from the website

   - There is no mission statement other than the WSDOT mission statement

   - Never publish a page before it is complete, no "under construction" or "coming soon" pages

3. **Maintenance**

   - All websites must have a content owner who performs quarterly maintenance on the website

   - Once you remove a link to a document that document should also be removed from the website

   - All content should be posted with a life cycle and end date in mind

4. **Accessibility**

   - All content on the website must meet Section 508 guidelines

- Avoid using tables for anything other than tabular content

- All images should have alternative text

- Clearly label all form fields on documents and online

5. **Links**

- Links should be clearly labeled on where they will take users. Never use "Click Here" as a link label.
  Ex: Quarterly business reports for the Federal Highway Administration council

- Any links to your page must match the page title, users should know what content they are going to find when clicking on a link. This ensures visitors searching for your content can easily find it.

- No more than 25 links on any one page. If you have more, consider breaking it up into multiple pages.

- Always label documents linked to on a page with (type, size):
  Ex: WSDOT organization chart (pdf, 415 mb)

6. **Navigation**

- Your left navigation should represent the content areas of the topic of your page.

- Do not put documents or links to pages outside of your site area in the left navigation.

7. **Documents**

- The maximum size of any documents on our site is 10 mb. If your document is larger than that, try splitting it up into separate sections or save in a reduced quality.

- PDFs should be saved for fast web viewing and contain the document title and author in its properties in order to be searchable.

- The first page of your PDF should clearly label what the document is and where it originated

- All documents on the website are considered copies of the original for records retention purposes and should be stored accordingly

- See "Naming Files" below for information on naming PDFs

Photos

- All photos should be saved for the Web using Photoshop. Select medium quality for Jpegs and PNG-8 for PNGs in Photoshop. If you do not have Photoshop, please send your photos to WebHelp for processing.

- Small images should be no larger than 20kb, large images no larger than 60kb. Anything larger should be posted to Flickr.

- Photos should not be used to simply break up text. They must add value to the content.
  Ex: a photo of a semi-truck on the freeway for the Commercial Vehicles home

- All photos must have alternative text

- Information on naming files below

Naming files

- The file name is important and must be an unique title to find in our Drupal library

- File names should not include "draft," "edit," "final" or the numerical date in the file name.

- All filenames, regardless of type, should make sense out of context and clearly label the content when created for online audience.
  Ex: "January Report" is not unique enough but "Leg-Report-Jan-2016" is

CHAPTER 8
GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION

Communication and community engagement planning takes time and effort; the more time you spend up front on your plan, the more effective you will be in reaching your goal. As soon as your organization or project team starts planning objectives and activities, you should also begin planning ways to communicate them.

Contact <u>WSDOT Graphics</u> for guidance or assistance.

Why do I need graphic design?

Communicate your message clearly and consistently

Graphic design plays an important role in everyday decision making, that is why an ongoing graphic design program is an important part of a good communications strategy. Such a program, guides the look of everything from the agency logo to print materials, signage, exhibits and presentation materials, it promotes a clear, consistent image for WSDOT and your project.

Graphic design is a creative process – most often involving a client and a designer who work collaboratively to create a product that will convey a specific message (or messages) to a targeted audience. Often referred to as Visual Communication or Communication Design, various methods are used to create and combine words, symbols, and images to create a visual representation of ideas and messages.

Your designer may use typography, visual arts and page layout techniques to produce the desired final result. A design product would include the WSDOT logo, other illustrations, infographics or artwork, organized text and design elements such as shapes and color. Each element serves to unify the piece, (or multiple products), ensure readability and support the WSDOT brand. Composition is one of the most important features of graphic design, especially when using pre-existing materials or diverse elements.

WSDOT's graphic professionals are on staff to assist in the creation of products that are agency branded, conform to ADA and Title VI standards and present a professional public facing presence. They understand the importance of good design that will attract attention, support the key message(s) and yet is easy for the public to read and digest.

WSDOT brand

WSDOT's visual brand -- from logo usage, to color theory, to how we build charts, maps and other graphics -- is absolutely critical to delivering information to the public. This is important for both print and electronic design products.

It is important to maintain consistency in WSDOT messaging and graphic design to ensure readers recognize WSDOT products, which reinforce our OneDOT brand.

Our products should reflect the basic concepts of project delivery and accountability – the basic tenets of the open communications for which we strive with the traveling public. Graphic products should relate this straightforward approach and be designed with this in mind.

Planning your project

Establish your goals

Whether you're working on a large or small project, start by defining project goals, audience and WSDOT's position/ perspective on the subject. If there are others who will be involved in the approval process, be sure their input is included in the planning stage; hearing new criteria from different sources during or after the design and presentation stage is inefficient and costly. Make sure everyone has a clear understanding of the project's purpose and function.

To help guide your team's goal-setting process, consider the following points to refine your team's goal for the graphic project:

Text should be written in clear, concise language and be visually easy to read. It should contain common words, rather than jargon, acronyms or unnecessary legal language. You will do this if you...

- Stay on message
- Reinforce our agency's OneDOT brand
- Write short sections and limit paragraphs to one issue
- Use declarative headings
- Use short sentences
- Use an appropriate tone
- Use the active voice
- Avoid words that confuse readers
- Use vertical lists

Graphics should...

- Relate information clearly and accurately.
- Portray information efficiently
- Be consistent in how we display information.
- Efficiently portray information.
- Include necessary elements so readers can fully comprehend data or other information (legends, captions, data references).

Explore design options

Your designer will research the problem and conduct a broad exploration of ideas and design approaches. Through this visual brain-storming, the designer will come up with one or more graphic design solutions.

Design development, presentation and go-ahead

After identifying the design direction that most accurately fit your needs, WSDOT designers will develop the preliminary composition into final art. A final presentation will be made to key persons within your organization and final input or design adjustments can be implemented at that time. After a consensus is reached, the designer is given the final go-ahead and sign off to complete the finished project.

Implementation

The designer finalizes the selected design, then directs and coordinates all production activity including providing final art to the printer or other process. The designer supervises the project through each stage of production to ensure its success. Art intended for electronic transmission will be packaged in the proper format for the desired distribution method.

Follow up

This is an important and all-too-often forgotten phase of a project. After the project is completed, find out what results the piece achieved. Did it accomplish its goal? How was it received? What would you do differently next time? What would you do the same? Always learn from your last job and share the outcome with your designer.

Maintain an on-going relationship with your designer

Most companies find it's both cost- and time-effective to develop continuing relationships with one or more designers who you have worked with in the past. In this way, both the client and designer have a good idea of what to expect of each other in the future. Working with a designer who is already familiar with past graphic products and goals, can be more responsive to your immediate and future needs.

Maximize your budget and results

Consult with the Graphic Communications office for your graphic needs early in the planning stages. They can design professional products that will meet agency standards and help you avoid common pitfalls and costly mistakes. They are available to guide and review consultant work to ensure it meets agency standards and guidelines.

Be open to suggestions; encourage creative input. Your designer can often suggest fresh approaches and money-saving solutions.

Reaping the rewards

Good design can – and should – happen at all levels of business, from the simplest form to a major corporate identity. Your designer can help you achieve an image that is consistent, professional and effective.

Whether your project is big or small, old or new, good design is good business.

Graphic Design Project Checklist

Follow the steps below to ensure that you and the designer will have everything necessary to successfully execute your project:

1. **Designate a Decision Maker**—The designer will liaison or contact the person who has either final authority on all aspects of your project or who will act as a liaison in those matters. This will clear up any confusion on last-minute changes/questions before the product is sent to the printer.

2. **A Deadline**—Establish a clear cut-off date for each product in your overall project.

   • How much time do you really have? Be realistic in your assumptions. Consider the following and consult with your designer to estimate:

   • The time it will take for the designer To design/layout your project

   • Allow time for your team to proof the product, note revisions/corrections and time for the designer to make those revisions

   • Get an estimate—on both cost and production time—from the printshop for your job.

   • Be sure to provide as much pertinent information about the job that you know: number of desired copies, single or double sided printing, binding, folding, trimming, mounting, laminating, paper type, finish, color, etc. Complex jobs take longer and are more expensive, so take the time to find out which options will work best and how they will impact your deadline and budget.

   • If you're unsure about your options or how to reduce your costs, consult a designer.

3. **Text**—Ensure your team has scheduled enough time to edit, review and finalize text before it's handed off to the designer. Minor edits to text are to be expected; extensive changes made to text after the designer has already flowed it into the design document cause unnecessary delays, and in some cases move the project back to square one, leading to missed deadlines.

4. **Photos and/or art**—As a general rule, for print, make sure photos are high quality (300 ppi) and close to the size it will print; for web, a lower quality file (72 ppi) is acceptable, and close to the finished display size. For logos, vector-based art is preferable to bitmap images. Talk to the designer if you're unsure, and they will advise you.

5. **Infographics**—In the case of charts, graphs, timelines, tables or maps, clients are advised to submit the necessary data to the designer as early as possible, so they can determine the best way to translate the information into an infographic.

   • Submitting charts or graphs built in Excel can speed up the process and increase accuracy, but clients must avoid using drops shadows, 3-D rendering, gradient backgrounds, or fonts other than Lato or Arial. Failing to follow these recommendations may result in delays, as these will require a fix before the designer can proceed.

   • Tabular data should be submitted to the designer in either Word or Excel.

6. **ADA and Title VI**—By federal law, communication pieces must have ADA and Title VI information displayed on them. If they do not, we are in noncompliance with federal law, and risk losing federal funding.
   According to the ADA website, under Title II of the ADA, "all state and local governments are required to take steps to ensure that their communications with people with disabilities are as effective as communications with others.

This requirement referred to as "effective communication…" means that whatever is written or spoken must be as clear and understandable to people with disabilities as it is for people who do not have disabilities. This is important because some people have disabilities that affect how they communicate."

Secretary's ExecutiveOrder

"WSDOT employees are directed to provide equal access and nondiscrimination in all of its programs, services, and activities. No individual with a disability shall, solely on the basis of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of the department's programs, services, or activities, in accordance with:

- ⬚   Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended.

- ⬚   Section 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

- ⬚   Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 49.60 Discrimination – human rights commission."

If you are unclear about where to find, or how to apply this language on our communications materials, contact WSDOT Graphics for assistance.

7. **Postal Permit number—**If you're doing a direct mail piece, be sure to consult with your designer at the start of the project.

8. **Charge Codes**—Have this information ready for the designer, so they can communicate this to the printer before they start the job.

9. **Add a cushion**—Responsible project managers have a contingency plan in place. That includes adding a "time cushion" into your design project schedule to accommodate those last minute—and potentially costly— complications that can occur.

How to work with WSDOT Graphics

What does graphics need from me?

WSDOT Graphics is an award-winning design team that strives to provide the best possible customer service within the agency. Please consider the following when working with Graphics to ensure a successful design product.

Establish a clear cut off date for each product in your overall project. If content isn't finalized and/or approved, this may impact your deadline.

Maximizing budget and results

Remember your designer is also a creative problem-solver. To get the most value out of your budget, call your designer early in the process, before a project is defined.

Be open to suggestions and encourage creative input. Your designer can often suggest fresh approaches and money-saving solutions.

A clear definition of your project goals

Have a clear picure of what your project goals are and who your audience is for your design project. This will help your designer during the design phase.

Designated point person and decision-maker

Who has final authority or will act as a liaison for the product? Establish one point of contact for your designer to work with.

If there are others who will be involved in the approval process, be sure their input has been included before submitting content to Graphics. Have them review, edit and approve the content in a Word document. If the content has not been finalized, Graphics will hold off on layout. Once Graphics starts the layout process, content changes are more time consuming and challenging to make.

Ample time

Allow ample time for the production of your product. Graphics is a small staff serving a large agency, and often receives last minute and priority requests. In most cases a week should be ample time for graphic production, but printing may add to this. Discuss your timeframe early on with your designer.

FINAL copy

Edit, review and finalize document text before submitting to Graphics. Minor edits to text are to be expected; however extensive text changes after it has been placed into the design document causes unnecessary delays and often requires a rework of the entire layout. At that point, Graphics can't guarantee that the project will be finished within the initial requested timeframe as the office juggles multiple projects with competing deadlines at any given time.

If multiple content reworks are requested, your designer will contact you to discuss further. Graphics may stop layout work until content is finalized and approved.

A deadline

Establish a clear cut off date for each product in your overall project. If content isn't finalized and/or approved, this may impact your deadline.

Logos

There are two approved WSDOT logos:

Acronym

Approved in 2015 by the WSDOT Executive team, the acronym WSDOT logo is the primary logo. This should be used on all WSDOT documents such as brochures, folios, Web pages, posters and presentations.

The benefits of this logo are that it works well in limited space and can be seen and recognized quickly, such as on highway signage or very small items, like pens. The logo should appear in only PMS 335* (green), black, or reversed in white.

Two-line

The horizontal two-line logo is our secondary logo. This logo should appear on any WSDOT documentation that is used or produced for audiences outside of Washington state. This is also the primary logo choice for agency letterheads. The logo should appear in only PMS 335* (green), black, or reversed in white.

Social media

Flying T in social media and mobile

Social media sites, where an icon is a necessary component of the site, may require the use of the Flying T alone. These situations are rare and require the full agency name to be identified elsewhere on the page.

Please remember, while you may have become accustomed to the WSDOT logo, external audiences probably won't recognize that the Flying T mark represents our agency unless it is coupled with the logotype.

** If converting to CMYK for process printing,
  use C=97, M=6, Y=69, K=19*

Rules for logo size and positioning

Position

- The WSDOT logo should be surrounded with clear space to ensure its visibility and impact. No graphic elements of any kind should invade this zone. This also includes the distance of the logo from the edge of a document.

- Clear space is developed from the bottom of the circle to the top of the "T" in the logo.

- Minimum clearance is the height of the "T" on all sides.

Acronym

- The smallest size should be no less than 1.875" in width (width sets the precedent for height). This size should work for most standard printed pieces, i.e. folios, one pagers, forms, etc.

Two-line

- The smallest size should be no less than 2.6" in width.

Large format

- For larger formats, the logo should increase proportionally.

11 x 17
130 %

18 x 24
210%

24 x 36
280%

Logos: standards and guidelines

Below are examples of what cannot be done to the approved WSDOT logos/logotypes.

Do NOT

- Re-typeset the logotype Washington State Department of Transportation or substitute any other typeface, font weight or style in the logotype.

- Change the size relationship of the logo elements.

- Squeeze, stretch or condense the logo out of proportion.

- Print the logo in more than one color.

- Outline the logo.

- Use the flying T by itself.*

- Set logo on an angle or rearrange the logo and text.

- Combine other elements with the logo.

- Add a drop shadow to the logo.

- Place logo on low contrasted background image.

- Add other words to the logotype (for exceptions, see Rules for co-branded logo use. For internal use only!—pg 7).

* Exeptions include hardhats, safety vests and social media icons (see page 2).

Rules for co-branded Internal logo use

The purpose of internal branding is to provide our offices, modes, and divisions their own unique identifiers while at the same time maintaining constancy of our ONE DOT look and feel. WSDOT internal branding is an in-the-family version of the WSDOT's external branding.

Internal branding for an office, mode, or division must be created by the Graphics office only at the request of a division director and must adhere to usage guidelines outlined below:

They can ONLY be used for INTERNAL:

Word documents

PowerPoint presentations (i.e. training)

Folios

Posters

Miscellaneous internal collateral

They are NOT to be used for EXTERNAL:

Publications or documents

PowerPoint presentations

Folios or one-pagers

Posters

Websites

Use on both internal and external web pages

The logo lockup has vertical and horizontal options. A request for a co-branded logo should be made to WSDOT Graphics at graphics@wsdot.wa.gov.
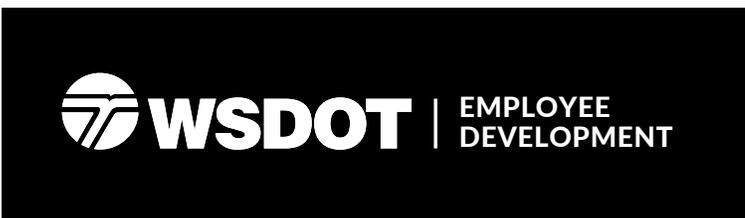
Logos: exceptions

Amtrak Cascades

Amtrak Cascades is a joint service paid for and managed by WSDOT and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). The two states contract with Amtrak to operate the service. This relationship with ODOT and Amtrak means some design standards for Amtrak-related materials deviate from WSDOT-specific style.

- The Amtrak Cascades service has its own logo—with the copyright owned by Amtrak—that is used on trains, publications and marketing.

- It features the words Amtrak Cascades with a stylized mountain range between the words.

- The fonts are Helvetica Bold and Bauer Bodoni.

- The color palette is Cascade Evergreen (PMS 560C) and Cascade Nugget (PMS 730C).

- The logo may appear in white or black as needed.

Amtrak Cascades' marketing campaigns may deviate from WSDOT design-specific standards based on specific promotions or campaigns, but items still must adhere to the agency's overall professional and ethical standards.

All publications by WSDOT's rail, freight and ports division, such as folios, presentation boards, PowerPoint presentations and news releases, will follow WSDOT graphic design standards.

Washington State Ferries

Rules for WSF logo use

- The logo should appear in only PMS 335* (green), black, PMS 314** (blue), or reversed in white.

- The screened areas of the logo are 30% of the one color printed.

- The logo can also be used without the tinted stripes.

- The logotype Washington State Ferries should never be re-typeset.

- Do not use the ferry symbol by itself.

*   If converting to CMYK for process printing,
    use C=97, M=6, Y=69, K=19

** If converting to CMYK for process printing,
    use C=100, M=5, Y=14, K=17
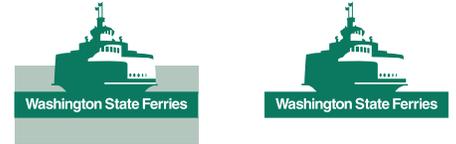
Pantone 335 WSF Logo

Pantone 314 WSF Logo
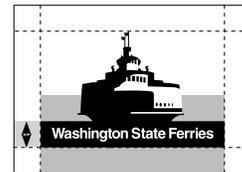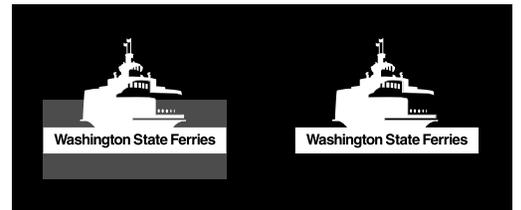
Clear space

A clear space equal to the height of the center text bar should be maintained around the entire logo. This helps to preserve the integrity of the identity and to prevent other forms from being incorporated into the logo.

Connecting Washington

Funding packages such as Connecting Washington and initiatives directed by the Governor's office such as Results WSDOT are examples of customized branding with their own unique logo.

Colors

WSDOT's color palette is a group of colors approved for use on agency publications and marketing materials. Consistent use of the color palette is necessary to maintain the integrity of our graphic identity. Certain programs within WSDOT will have different colors palettes, including: Connecting Washington, Tolling, Alaskan Way Viaduct and Replacement Program, SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program, and Washington State Ferries. The graphic designer assigned to your project will select the colors from the approved palettes that most appropriately represent the purpose of the document and its intended audience.

Refer to the color palettes on the following page for the approved agency colors. The palettes also include tints (screens) of the ink colors (80%, 60%, and 40%). The primary color for WSDOT is PMS 335. If converting to CMYK for process printing use C=100, M=0, Y=65, K=30. These approved color palettes should also be followed for other media, including video and electronic materials.

Primary wsdot color palette

PMS 433
CMYK: 90, 68. 41, 90
RGB: 29, 37, 45
HEX: 1D252D

RGB: 74, 81, 87 / HEX: 4A5157
RGB: 119, 124, 129 / HEX: 777C81
RGB: 165, 168, 171 / HEX: A5A8AB

PMS 7722
CMYK: 89, 0, 45, 72
RGB: 0, 81, 81
HEX: 005151

RGB: 51, 116, 116 / HEX: 337474
RGB: 102, 151, 151 / HEX: 669797
RGB: 153, 185, 185 / HEX: 99B9B9

PMS 335 - PRIMARY
CMYK: 100, 0, 65, 30
RGB: 0, 123, 95
HEX: 007B5F

RGB: 51, 149, 127 / HEX: 33957F
RGB: 102, 176, 159 / HEX: 66B09F
RGB: 153, 202, 191 / HEX: 99CABF

PMS 354
CMYK: 81, 0, 92, 0
RGB: 0, 177, 64
HEX: 00B140

RGB: 51, 193, 102 / HEX: 33C166
RGB: 102, 208, 140 / HEX: 66D08C
RGB: 153, 224, 179 / HEX: 99E0B3

PMS 375
CMYK: 46, 0, 90, 0
RGB: 151, 215, 0
HEX: 97D700

RGB: 172, 223, 51 / HEX: ACDF33
RGB: 193, 231, 102 / HEX: C1E766
RGB: 213, 239, 153 / HEX: D5EF99

PMS 577
CMYK: 35, 2, 58, 0
RGB: 169, 196, 127
HEX: A9C47F

RGB: 186, 208, 153 / HEX: BAD099
RGB: 203, 220, 178 / HEX: CBDCB2
RGB: 221, 231, 204 / HEX: DDE7CC

Color palette exceptions

CONNECTING WASHINGTON

PMS 7722
CMYK: 89, 0, 45, 72
RGB: 0, 81, 81
HEX: 005151

PMS 335
CMYK: 100, 0, 65, 30
RGB: 0, 123, 95
HEX: 007B5F

PMS 354
CMYK: 81, 0, 92, 0
RGB: 0, 177, 64
HEX: 00B140

TOLLING

PMS 519
CMYK: 65, 95, 9, 40
RGB: 89, 49, 95
HEX: 59315F

PMS 335
CMYK: 97, 6, 69, 19
RGB: 0, 123, 95
HEX: 007B5F

PMS 375
CMYK: 46, 0, 90, 0
RGB: 151, 215, 0
HEX: 97D700

ALASKAN WAY VIADUCT AND REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

PMS Black
CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 100
RGB: 0, 0, 0
HEX: 000000

PMS 1585
CMYK: 0, 61, 97, 0
RGB: 255, 106, 19
HEX: FF6A13

PMS 447
CMYK: 50, 30, 40, 90
RGB: 55, 58, 54
HEX: 373A36

SR 520 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT AND HOV PROGRAM

PMS 335
CMYK: 100, 0, 65, 30
RGB: 0, 123, 95
HEX: 007B5F

PMS 433
CMYK: 90, 68. 41, 90
RGB: 29, 37, 45
HEX: 1D252D

PMS 447
CMYK: 50, 30, 40, 90
RGB: 55, 58, 54
HEX: 373A36

WASHINGTON STATE FERRIES

PMS 335
CMYK: 100, 0, 65, 30
RGB: 0, 123, 95
HEX: 007B5F

PMS 375
CMYK: 46, 0, 90, 0
RGB: 151, 215, 0
HEX: 97D700

PMS 3125
CMYK: 84, 0, 18, 0
RGB: 0, 174, 199
HEX: 00AEC7

PMS 314
CMYK: 100, 5, 14, 17
RGB: 0, 127, 163
HEX: 007FA3

PMS 1585
CMYK: 0, 61, 97, 0
RGB: 255, 106, 19
HEX: FF6A13

Chart styles and color order

WSDOT's chart styles should be clean, well-organized and easy-to-read. Where possible, there is a specified order that the colors should appear on each chart. The order of the colors have been chosen to provide a balanced palette that alternates darker and lighter colors for better readability. Font
size should be no less than 8 pts and no more than 10 pts. Lines should be
.5 pt PMS 447 or 80% black. Grid lines behind graphics should be 20% black or 40% white in front of graphics. The white lines in pie charts should be 1 pt.

COLOR ORDER

1	PANTONE 335
2	PANTONE 375
3	PANTONE 3125
4	Dark Gray
5	PANTONE 354
6	PANTONE 314
7	PANTONE 577
8	PANTONE 519

PIE CHARTS

Lorem XX%
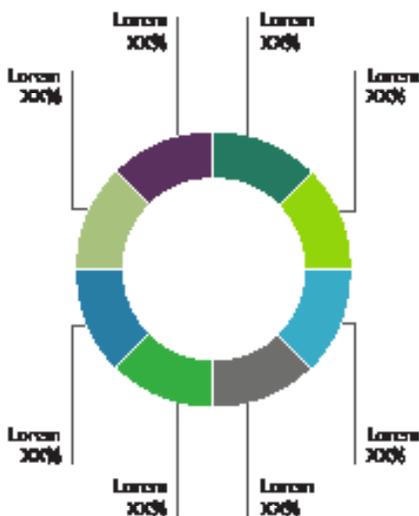
DONUT
Stylistic variation of a pie chart that enables the inclusion of a total value or design element in the center.

ROADS
$740 M $746 M

FERRIES
$150 M $194 M

AVIATION
$70 M $30 M

RAIL
$301 M $105 M
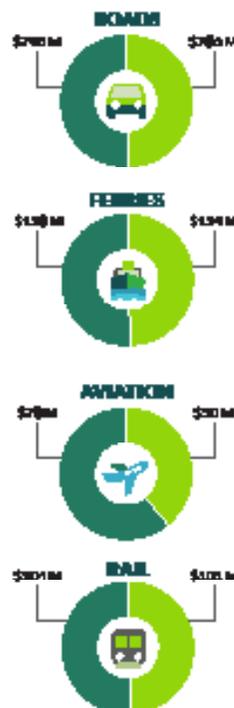
Pie charts are used for **MAKING PART-TO-WHOLE** comparisons with discrete or continuous data. They are most impactful with a small data set.

Start the largest section at 12 o'clock, going clockwise.

ORDER SLICES CORRECTLY
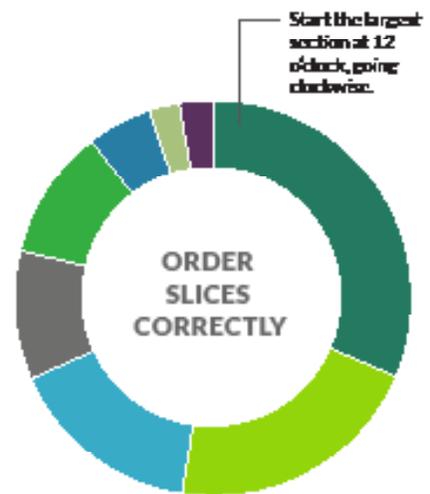
Place remaining sections in descending order, going clockwise.

BAR CHARTS

PAGE VIEWS, BY MONTH

VERTICAL (COLUMN CHART)
Used for CHRONOLOGICAL DATA (time-series should always run left to right).

CONTENT PUBLISHED, BY CATEGORY

HORIZONTAL
Used for data with LONG CATEGORY LABELS.

MONTHLY TRAFFIC, BY SOURCE

STACKED
Used when there is a need to compare
MULTIPLE PART-TO-WHOLE relationships.
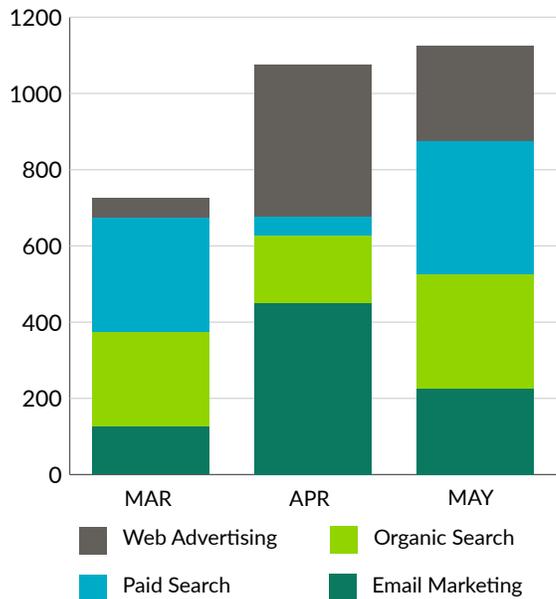
PERCENTAGE OF CONTENT PUBLISHED, BY MONTH

100% STACKED
Used when the total value of each category is unimportant and PERCENT-AGE DISTRIBUTION OF SUBCATEGORIES is the primary message.

LINE CHARTS

Line charts are used to show **TIME-SERIES** relationships with continuous data. They help show trend, acceleration, deceleration, and volatility.

PAGEVIEWS, BY MONTH
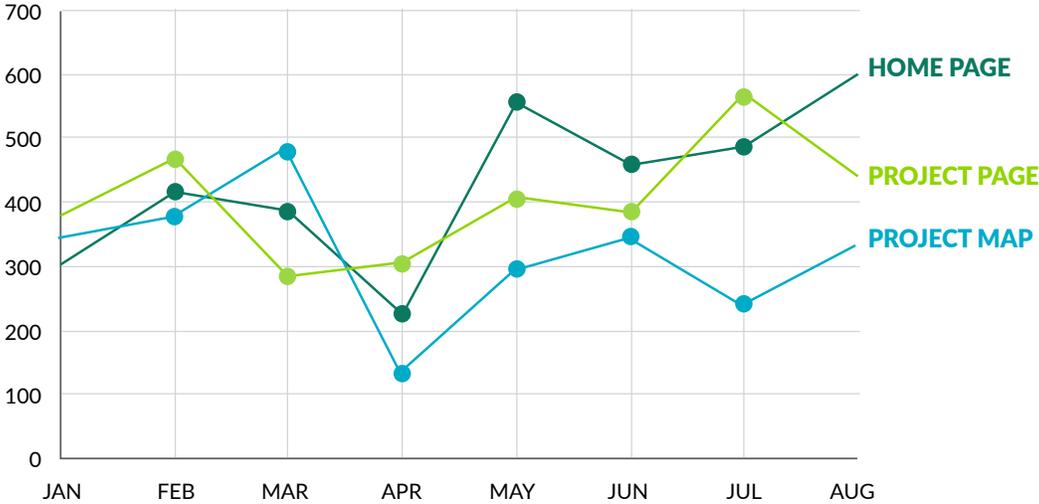
AREA CHARTS

An area chart displays **QUANTITATIVE** data. Area charts are most commonly used to show overall trends in data over time.
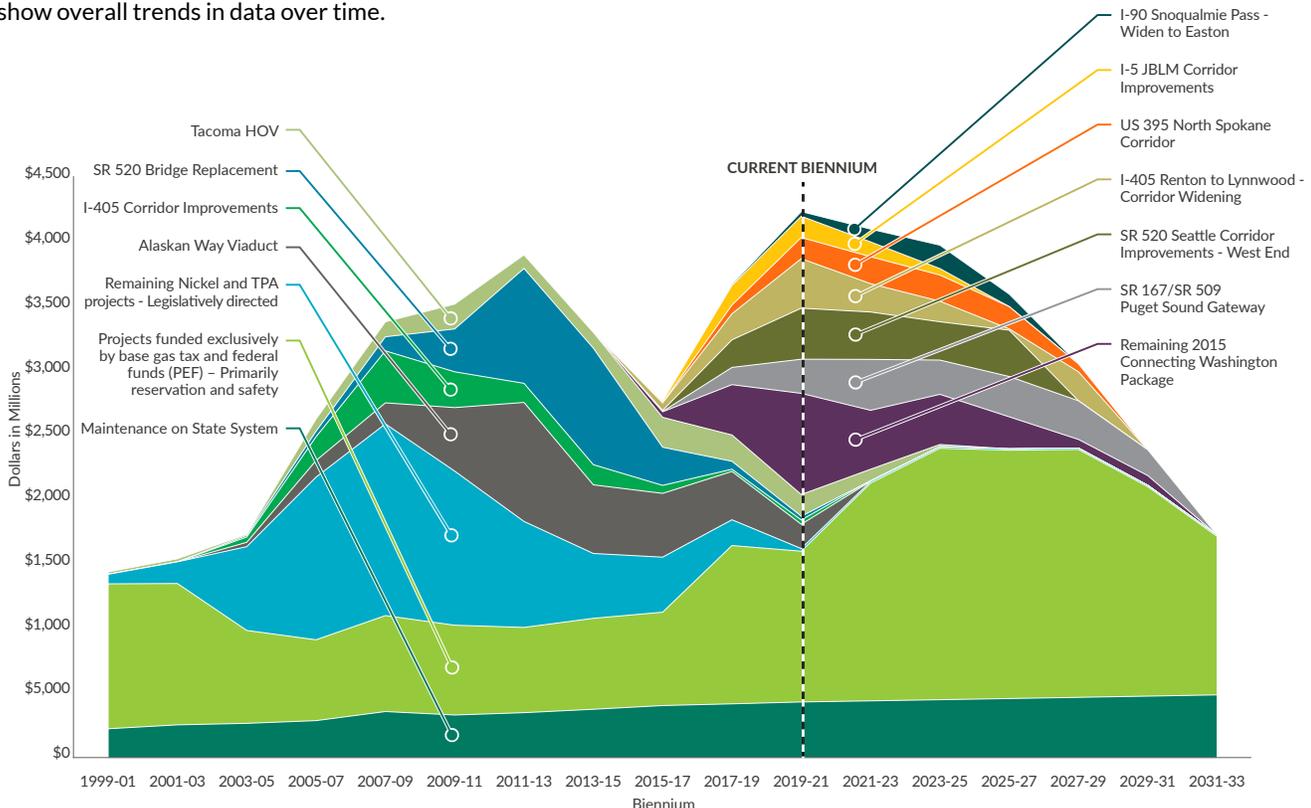
Icons

- Icons should help the user absorb and process information more efficiently while providing visual interest.

- Icons should be relevant to the content and simple in design.

- Icons should be used to draw attention to your content, not to diminish or replace it.

- Icons should not be used to represent complex thought processes, ideologies, or concepts.

Infographics

Infographics should be used to convey data and statistics quickly and accurately in a visually interesting and compelling format.

WSDOT AWARDED

58.9% OF **CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS BELOW THE ENGINEER'S ESTIMATE IN FY2015**
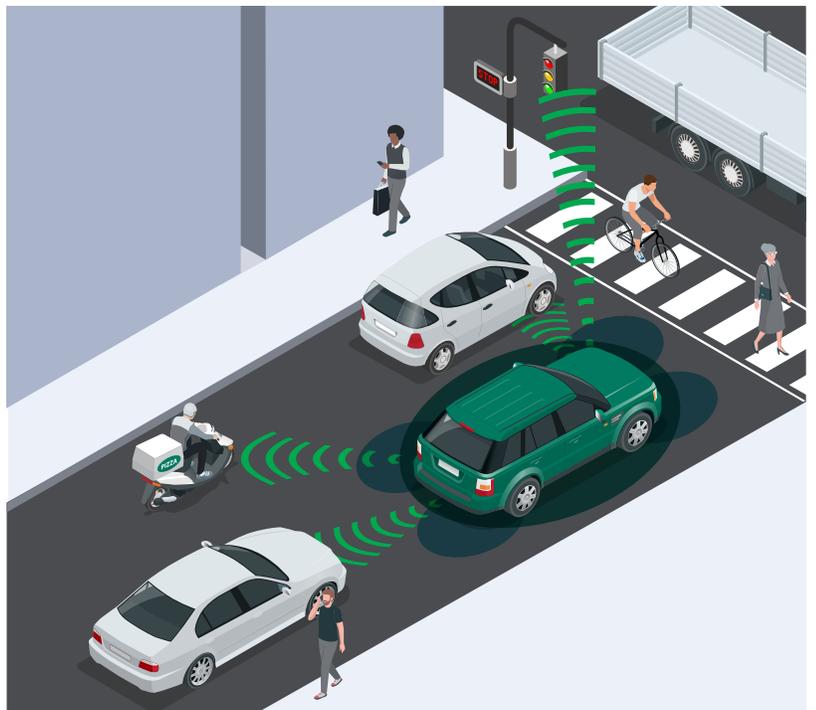
Maps

Using maps is an important way to illustrate details about your project location, phases, etc. WSDOT has developed map standards so readers know what to expect when viewing maps.

LEGEND

— Alternate route from Eastbound SR 16 to Northbound I-5

COLORS

	LAND	CMYK: 6, 3, 0, 0
	WATER	CMYK: 42, 3, 13, 0
	PROJECT	CMYK: 0,59, 90, 0
	ROADS	CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 40
	NON-STATE	CMYK: 56,46,45,11

MAP SYMBOLS

DETOUR

CONSTRUCTION

RAILROAD TRACKS
Two strokes stacked
stroke 1: solid
stroke 2: 6pt
dash: .5 | gap 4pt

FERRY ROUTES
PMS Process Blue
dash: 5.5pt | gap: 2.5pt
butt cap

CLOSURE

EXITS
124

ARROW
N

SHIELDS
5 2 167
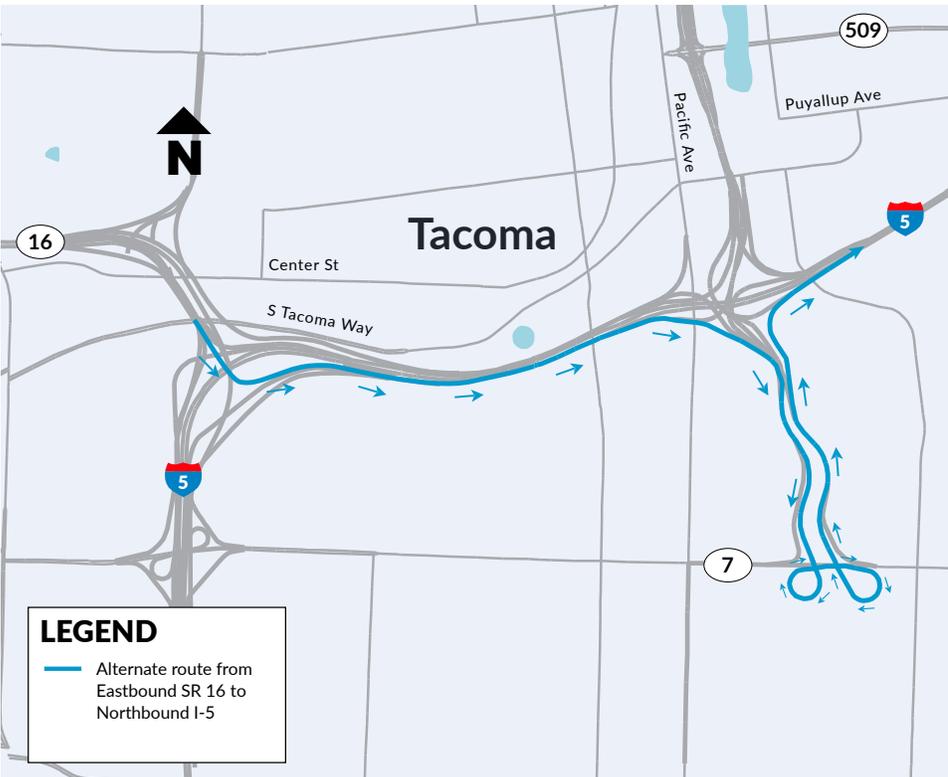
ALTERNATE ROUTE COLORS

PMS Red 32	PMS 7549
PMS 335	PMS 375
PMS 2415	PMS 3125
PMS 368 dash: 1pt	gap: 4.5pt rounded cap	PMS Process Blue dash: 2pt	gap: 2pt butt cap
PMS Process Blue dash: 3pt	gap: 6pt rounded cap	PMS 7549 dash: 1pt	gap: 1pt butt cap

Proposed Options:

116 **Exit 116:** Mounts Road interchange.

119 **Exit 119:** Steilacoom-DuPont Road interchange.

122 **Exit 122**: Rebuild Berkeley Street interchange.

123 **Exit 123**: Rebuild Thorne Lane interchange.

124 **Exit 124**: Gravelly Lake Drive interchange.

An additional through lane will be added northbound from Steilacoom-DuPont Road to Thorne lane (Exit 123.)n.

An additional through lane will be added southbound from Thorne Lane (Exit 123) to Steilacoom-DuPont Rd. (Exit 119).

Bicycle/Pedestrian Path

Gravelly-Thorne Connector

Lakewood

American Lake

Tillicum

Puget Sound

DuPont

Camp Murray

Lewis North

Lewis Main

5

116

Joint Base Lewis McChord

N

Map 1 (upper left):

N

To Enumclaw

410

410

Chinook Pass
Elevation: 5,430 ft.

PIERCE COUTNY
YAKIMA COUTNY

Cayuse Pass
Elevation: 4,675 ft.

Mt. Rainier
National Park

123

To Ohanapecosh

Map 2 (upper right):

N

2nd Ave S

1st Ave S

5

Jackson St

S King St

S King St
Station

4th Ave S

519

S Dearborn

99

CenturyLink
Field

Royal Brougham Way

90

Map 3 (lower left):

Whidbey
Island

Everett

Mukilteo

525

2

9

104

522

SNOHOMISH COUNTY
KING COUNTY

3

104

Poulsbo

203

3

305

Redmond

Lake
Washington

Bainbridge
Island

520

202

Bremerton

Seattle

Bellevue

405

90

Puget
Sound

5

Kitsap Peninsula

Sea-Tac
Int'l
Airport

Renton

KITSAP COUNTY
PIERCE COUNTY

Vashon
Island

509

167

Purdy

Kent

16

Federal
Way

Auburn

18

Tacoma

Fife

KING COUNTY
PIERCE COUNTY

Tacoma
Narrows
Bridge

167

Lakewood

512

Puyallup

5

Legend:

Freeway HOV &
HOT Lane System

— HOV lanes operate 24 hours
— HOV lanes operate 24 hours, 3+
— HOV lanes operate 5 am - 7 pm
— HOV lanes in Reversible Express
Lane Roadway (variable hours)
····· HOT lanes operate 5 am - 7 pm
····· Construction funded
····· Construction unfunded or
partially funded
○ Direct Access Ramps – Open
Ⓣ Direct Access Ramps – Open
(Transit Only)
● Direct Access Ramps – Future

NOTE: HOV lanes require two or more
people (2+) unless otherwise noted.
Hours of operation are for all seven days
of the week.

Map 4 (lower right):

N

536

Mount Vernon

Skagit River

5

Project information is represented in orange line with dots at the beginning and end of the project. Projects that cover a small area or distance can be indicated with a single dot.

Typography

Consistent use of type is vital for a strong graphic identity.

Web-use: Lato

This is a highly readable font and should be used on all web publications.

Print-use: Lato

It should be used in documents produced in desktop publishing programs such as InDesign. It is also available in Regular, Italic, Bold and Bold Italic.

Additional options within this font family can be used with discretion. These are: Medium, Semi-bold, Heavy, and Black. Due to poor readability, Hairline, Thin, and Light should not be used.

Exception: Arial should be used in desktop programs such as Microsoft Word or PowerPoint.

Type size

The WSDOT standard paragraph style for publications is 11-point type with 14-point spacing between the lines. If readability is an issue, a larger font size is necessary. We suggest a font size no larger than 14 point and a font size no smaller than 9 point.

Italic and bold type

Use italic type appropriately — in small doses. A large amount of italic text is hard to read. Bold type should be used primarily for headlines and headings. In body copy, bold type should emphasize a point — multiple sentences or a full paragraph of bold text has the effect of shouting at your audience and will reduce receptivity to the message.

Italic type should not be used on websites due to poor readability. Text that is bold italic and underlined is overkill.

Underlined type

Do not underline text as this is reserved for hyperlinks.

LATO

AaBb**CcDd**
1234**5678**

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn
pqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

To be used for Web documents and documents produced in desktop publishing programs such as InDesign.

ARIAL

AaBb**CcDd**
1234**5678**

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

To be used for documents produced in Microsoft Word and PowerPoint.

Importance of white space

Professional designers actively employ white space. It's not just the space left over after everything has been placed on the page; it's a separate, vital design element.

Why white space is used

1. It separates elements on a page. This is the fundamental reason to use white space. Without it, your page looks cluttered and messy. Readers won't be able to tell what words relate to the images, and it is hard to read (so it probably wouldn't be read). Used properly, white space allows the reader's eye to take a break from content.

2. It improves readability and comprehension.

3. White space between paragraphs and around blocks of text actually helps people understand what they are reading better. According to research in 2004, this kind of white space increases comprehension by almost 20%. http://www.humanfactors.com/newsletters/yeah_but_can_you_give_me_a_reference.asp

4. It helps to create balance and therefore increase attention.

White space can be a powerful way of drawing the users attention to a particular screen element. To a non-designer, the most obvious way to make something stand out is to make it bigger. However, often surrounding the item with whitespace can be just as effective. Additionally, white space gives the document, poster or presentation a fresh, modern feel.

Graphic Identity Examples

The examples that follow show publications using the graphic identity. The results are an attractive, consistent design, usable across all programs in the agency to reinforce WSDOT's identity.

Washington state National Highway Freight Program Investments, FFY 2016-2020

Project Name	Project Owner	NHFP	Total Project Funding
Multimodal Projects			
South Terminal Modernization Project Phase II	Port of Everett	$1,812,000	$39,477,000
Port Community Technology System	Northwest Seaport Alliance	$1,500,000	$3,000,000
Big Pasco Intermodal Rail Reconstruction	Port of Pasco	$1,300,000	$1,700,000
State Projects			
I-90/Adams Co Line to Spokane Co Line Bridge Repairs	WSDOT - Eastern Region	$11,515,000	$11,750,000
I-5 SB 88th St to SR 531 SB On Ramp Vicinity - Paving	WSDOT - Northwest Region	$3,650,000	$3,725,000
I-90 / 468th Ave SE to W Summit Rd EB -Rehab Concrete	WSDOT - South Central Region	$22,308,000	$27,709,000
I-90/Floating Bridges - Replace Anchor Cables	WSDOT - Southwest Region	$5,929,000	$7,759,000
SR 501/I-5 to SW 26th St Ext Vic Including Couplet - Paving	WSDOT - Southwest Region	$1,769,000	$2,096,000
Local/Regional Projects			
S Lander St Grade Separation and Railway Safety Project	City of Seattle	$3,000,000	$123,000,000
Pacific Highway E/54th Ave E Intersection Improvements	City of Fife	$2,000,000	$9,262,000
142nd Ave & 24th St.	City of Sumner	$4,707,000	$6,418,000
Bigelow Gulch - Forker Road Connecter	Spokane County	$5,872,000	$9,684,000
Taylor Way Rehabilitation	City of Tacoma	$8,895,000	$21,386,000
Union Gap Regional Beltway Connector	City of Union Gap	$1,990,000	$7,331,000
SR 432 Corridor Improvements - Phase II	City of Longview	$5,300,000	$9,500,000
Barker Road/BNSF Grade Separation Project	City of Spokane Valley	$6,000,000	$18,738,000
US395/Ridgeline Drive Interchange	City of Kennewick	$1,944,000	$23,750,000
	Total Investment	**$89,491,000**	**$326,285,000**

FREIGHT INVESTMENT PLAN

The 2017 Washington State Freight Investment Plan was included as Appendix A to the 2017 Washington State Freight System Plan. It was developed to guide investments that benefit freight transportation in Washington and to track recent freight funding investments. It describes key funding sources, networks eligible for funding, and projects identified on those networks.

National Highway Freight Program

Includes a list of priority, financially constrained projects and describes how available National Highway Freight Program (NHFP) funds would be invested and matched in Washington

- Provides Washington with an estimated $89 million from federal fiscal years 2016 to 2020 – not including the required match.

- Leverages nearly $240 million in additional funding for freight related projects
- Identifies NHFP eligible projects that benefit the freight transportation system, aligned with federal and state transportation goals
- Designates Critical Urban Freight Corridor limit in Washington – 81.66 miles
- Designates Critical Rural Freight Corridor limit in Washington – 163.31 miles

MORE INFORMATION

Ron Pate
Rail, Freight, and Ports Division Director
360-705-6903
paterd@wsdot.wa.gov
http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/freight/

WSDOT

2017 Washington State Freight System Plan

KEEPING WASHINGTON VITAL AND COMPETITIVE THROUGH FREIGHT

Washington is the second most trade-dependent state per capita in the country. The freight system supports 1.41 million jobs in freight-dependent industries in Washington, with a gross business income of $550.5 billion. It is vital to the economy of our state and country as it enhances our state and national economies, backs national defense support systems, directly sustains hundreds of thousands of jobs, and delivers the necessities of life to residents on a daily basis.

The Washington State Department of Transportation developed the 2017 Washington State Freight System Plan to ensure that the transportation system supports the continued development of trade and sustains economic growth through efficient freight movement. The plan incorporates recent freight planning efforts by WSDOT and partners, and meets federal and state planning requirements.

The plan provides:

- Details about the importance of freight to state, regional, and local economies
- Freight analysis of volumes and forecasts
- Performance measures
- Major freight trends, issues, and needs
- Strategies
- Investment plan

Freight and Trade Drive Washington's Economy

Washington is the second most trade-dependent state in the nation

- 11,352 small and medium-sized goods exporters
- $126.8 billion in total imports and exports value

Freight-dependent industries have a major economic effect

- 1.41 million jobs in freight-dependent industries (wholesale/retail, manufacturing, construction, transportation, agriculture, forest products)
- $550.5 billion in gross business income for freight-dependent sectors

The Freight Transportation System in Washington is Multimodal

Goods are shipped into, out of, within, and through Washington via:

- highways and roadways
- railroads
- waterways
- airports
- pipelines

WSDOT

Tacoma/Pierce County HOV Program

WSDOT CULTURAL RESOURCE SUMMARY PREPARED FOR THE PUYALLUP TRIBE OF INDIANS

This document reports on the Washington State Department of Transportation's cultural resource activities within the following projects:

- I-5: Portland Avenue to Port of Tacoma Road - Northbound HOV, and subcontracts:
  1. Stage 1
  2. Clear Creek Mitigation Site
- I-5: Portland Avenue to Port of Tacoma Road - Southbound HOV

WSDOT provides this information on a quarterly basis to the Puyallup Tribe of Indians pursuant to the Memorandum of Agreement.

For more information, contact:

Lone Moody
Acting Project Engineer
360-412-3420
MoodyLo@wsdot.wa.gov

EXCAVATION CONTINUES ON HOV CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

No Cultural Resources Found

Crews working for the Washington State Department of Transportation excavated at the job site for numerous activities. Per WSDOT's agreement with the Tribe, archaeological monitors were present during the work.

Excavation activities within the monitoring areas this quarter include:

- Removal of old retaining walls
- Excavation for scour protection on south levee
- Excavation for retaining wall
- Removal of fill materials placed for construction access

Excavation activities outside the monitoring areas this quarter include:

- Excavation for sidewalk and roadway on 27th Street
- Excavation for drainage structures in Fife

No new cultural resources were encountered or recorded during this period.

WSDOT'S COMMITMENT TO REDUCING MOTORCYCLE CRASHES ALONG SR 20

Motorcycles are involved in twenty percent of all crashes along the North Cascades Highway.*

Each year, 14 motorcycles are involved in an accident along the route, 4 of these involve either incapacitating injuries or fatalities.*

To keep motorcyclists safe, we urge everyone to share the road and be alert, and we are reminding motorcyclists to make themselves visible, to use DOT-compliant motorcycle helmets, to utilize scenic turnouts when fatigued, and to always ride sober.

In addition, WSDOT is implementing several safety improvements along the route that were identified in a 2016 study.

Washington Pass Overlook – Milepost 162.3

Washington State Department of Transportation

The assistance of the Federal Highway Administration and the Washington State Patrol in the development of the Road Safety Audit is gratefully acknowledged.

PLEASE RIDE SAFELY.

CONTACT US

Washington State Department of Transportation
North Central Region
Traffic Office (Road Safety Audit Team)
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Washington State Department of Transportation

North Cascades Highway

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY & RIDER AWARENESS ALONG WASHINGTON STATE ROUTE 20

MOTORCYCLE CRASH TRENDS & CHARACTERISTICS BETWEEN SEDRO-WOOLLEY & OKANOGAN

Photos

Digital photos are composed of tiny dots called pixels. The more dots per one-inch line, the sharper the image. An image that is 3" x 5" in size, at 72 dots per inch (dpi), is composed of 216 x 360 pixels. It may look reasonable at 5 inches wide, but if you enlarge it to 7 inches wide it still contains the same 216 x 360 dots but now there are only 51 dots per inch.

General photo guidelines

Using low-resolution photos for print can result in photos appearing out of focus or fuzzy. Digital cameras have a number of resolution settings that affect the quality of a digital image. Make sure your camera is set at a high-resolution and make any adjustments to photo resolution on a duplicate copy of your photo in photo manipulation software.

High-resolution photos can always be converted to low-resolution photos, but the reverse is not true without a drastic loss in image quality. For instance, a large photo can be sized down, but a very small photo simply cannot be made large.

If you are taking a photograph to be used in a publication, turn off the date and time stamp feature on your camera; otherwise, your material will become quickly dated and removing the stamp through Photoshop requires additional time and effort.

Photography style

- Shoot images that are compelling and reflective of the work that WSDOT does for people using all modes of transportation.

- Avoid rehearsed images, photos should feel natural and unstaged. Simple and direct images are the best way to express who we are.

- Convey a sense of vitality. Use a variety of close-ups and wide shots, contrasting depths of field and carefully composed backgrounds.

- Represent racial, gender, age, ability/disability and

professional diversity.

- Be aware of all the components of an image before shooting or using them in WSDOT publications.

- Avoid using images that are out of focus, low resolution, or darkly lit.

Printing photos

Most laser printers print at either 300 or 600 dpi. Generally, digital photos will still print well as low as 160 dpi to 240 dpi at actual size. Print colors can vary from printer to printer depending on how the printer is calibrated.

For print, the resolution of your photo is extremely important. A photo might look good on your screen or on a laser printer, but may not look sharp when offset printed. Scans and photographic images must be of sufficient resolution to print on a press with good results (300 dpi is the suggested minimum size).

Images for electronic or digital communications should be 72 dpi at full size.

Copyright

Do not use images you have downloaded from a search engine to use in any publication. The copyright on these images is owned by the photographer or company who took them, and therefore, illegal and unethical to use on WSDOT materials. Graphics can create maps for you to use in your presentations that are legal to use.

Photos can be downloaded from WSDOT's Flickr site at: www.flickr.com/photos/wsdot and graphic communications maintains an image library catalogued by topic.
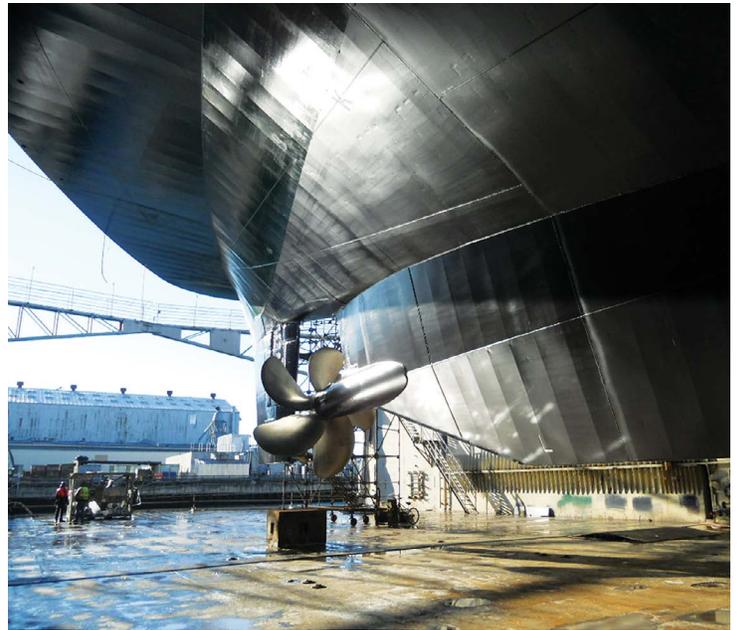
General design DOs and Don'ts

- **DO** make sure you have a high contrast between text and a colored background

- **DO NOT** use non-standard WSDOT colors for text or backgrounds

- **DO NOT** use drop shadows on photos

- **DO NOT** use drop shadows on text

- **DO NOT** use photos as backgrounds or watermarks behind text

- **DO** make sure ADA and Title VI information are included and up-to-date

WSDOT

JANUARY 2016

Title of the Document

A SUB-TITLE CAN GO HERE IF THERE IS ONE

Intro gives a summary of what is expected from the article and it should work together with the headline and because of this it is almost always the best thing to place it just below the headline

Paragraph Body Style) quat, lorem non porttitor tincidunt, pede nisl lacinia dolor, tempus aliquet mi tortor non neque. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. In quis odio. Maecenas dictum est at augue. Nam et ante id elit tristique cursus. Curabitur ipsum tortor, iaculis eget, pellentesque eu, aliquam sed, dui. Maecenas tincidunt tortor. Nunc dui velit, porttitor vel, blandit at, scelerisque sed, diam.

Subhead

Phasellus ac odio non purus viverra luctus. Integer eu mauris laoreet ligula sagittis lacerat. Integer gestas lectus mi scelerisque lacinia. Aliquam ante wisi, pharetra ultrices, vulputate et, aliquam sit amet, velit. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. Maecenas dictum, nulla a facilisis tristique, sapien velit molestie risus, vitae accumsan ligula.

Subhead

Maecenas pellentesque diam in nunc. Nulla pretium, orci ut commodo viverra, neque orci gravida arcu, sagittis luctus orci tellus a est. Vivamus eleifend bibendum sem. Donec lacus ante, vehicula a, adipiscing et, fermentum sed, eros. Aliquam ante wisi, pharetra ultrices, vulputate et, aliquam sit amet, velit. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. Maecenas dictum, nulla a facilisis tristique, sapien velit molestie risus, vitae accumsan ligula.

SIDEBAR TITLE

Maecenas pellentesque diam in nunc. Nulla pretium, orci ut commodo viverra, neque orci gravida arcu, sagittis luctus orci tellus est. Vivamus eleifend bibendum sem. Donec lacus ante, vehicula a, adipiscing et, fermentum sed, eros. Cras tempus massa ac magna scelerisque lobortis. Phasellus justo quis diam tincidunt bendum. Aliquam et, Donec lacus ante, vehicula a, adipiscing et, fermentum Cras tempus massa ac magna scelerisque lobortis.

MORE INFORMATION
First Last
**Title Style**
Region
555-555-5555
email@wsdot.wa.gov

PowerPoint Presentations

The WSDOT identity is built into the template. Conforming to standard colors, fonts, and logos that are agency approved supports the WSDOT brand. There are two styles that can be used.

4:3 format

Best for presentations that will be printed
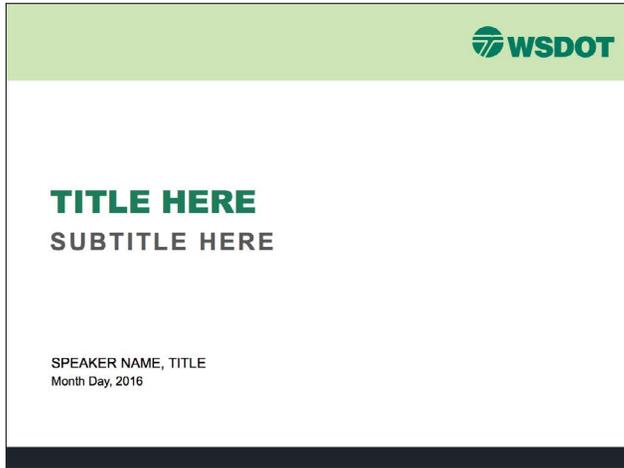
16:9 format

Default for PowerPoint, best for viewing on wide screens
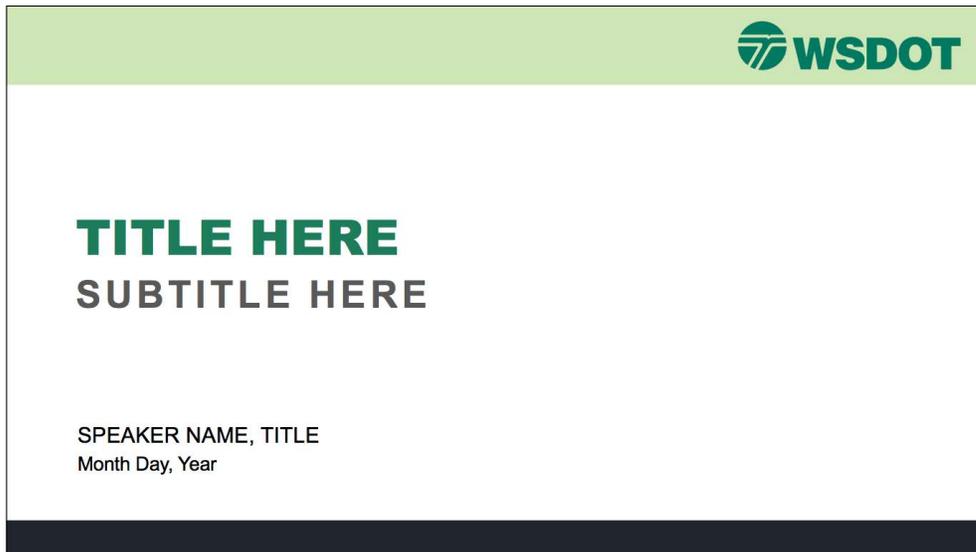
Tips for designing presentations:

Keep text to a minimum

Slides are representative for the key points in a presentation, not the presentation itself. Text should highlight and reinforce what you're saying as you give your presentation. Do not use paragraphs of text.

Use the right type

- Use Arial.

- Don't use drop shadows, it makes text hard to read.

- Use liberal, consistent leading (line spacing) throughout.

- Titles, bullet lists, and paragraphs of text are left justified. In limited situations, some text can be centered.

- Size type appropriately. Headings are largest; subheads next in size, body text next, item descriptions and chart values smallest.

Align text left or right

Centered text is harder to read and looks amateurish. Line up text to a right-hand or left-hand baseline – it looks better and will be easier to follow.

Avoid clutter

A headline, a few bullet points, maybe an image – anything more than that and you risk losing your audience as they sort it all out.

Use images sparingly

Only use images if they add important information or illustrate a point. Do NOT use clip art downloaded from the internet. If illustrative art is needed, the graphics department can provide you with licensed or original artwork. Do not use images "just because." Poor images can be a distraction for your audience.

Ada and Title VI Information

By law, both ADA and Title VI information is required on ALL publications that WSDOT produces.

This enables WSDOT to fulfill its commitment to taking those affirmative action steps which will ensure equitable participation in our business and employment opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, marital status or sexual orientation.

What is ADA?

The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) is federal legislation that opens up services and employment opportunities to Americans with disabilities. The law is intended to eliminate illegal discrimination and level the playing field for individuals with disabilities.

What is Title VI?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex or national origin in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance.

To get this language in an electronic format that you can cut and paste directly into your folios, go to the Title VI and ADA Language for Publications site:

ACCESSIBILITY NOTE:

Design decisions should consider persons who have visual disabilities or are colorblind. While it's not possible to make all of our materials without using red, green or blue, by taking color blindness into consideration we can use different values to create contrast and make materials more readable for those with disabilities.

For more information and tips for making print more readable, visit the American Foundation for the Blind.

Legal stuff - copyright materials, use of WSDOT logo, photos

Copyrights

What is a copyright?

Under copyright laws, the author of an original work has rights and protections that give exclusive right to:

- Reproduce the copyrighted work

- Prepare derivative works based on the copyrighted material

- Distribute copies of the copyrighted work to the public by sale, rental, lease or lending

- Display the copyrighted work publicly by literary or audiovisual means

- In the case of sound recordings, to perform the copyrighted work publicly by means of a digital audio transmission

Using materials from the Internet

Do not assume that everything posted to the Internet is public domain; postings of many kinds are protected the same as published printed works. Copyright protections for Internet postings are somewhat murky, however, there are guidelines you should follow when creating a webpage to avoid violations:

- Do not put the content of another person's or organization's website on your webpage

- Do not copy and paste information from various Internet sources to create "your own" document

- You can quote or paraphrase limited content, as long as you give credit to the original source and the location of the source

- Do not copy and paste logos, icons, photos and other graphics from other websites to your webpage, unless it is advertised as "freeware" or you have been granted permission from the organization to use the material

Use of WSDOT photos by others

WSDOT gets many requests to use our photos; the criteria for using our photos is the same as the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-NoDerivs 2.0 Generic:

- Photo credit must be given to the Washington State Department of Transportation

- Photos cannot be used for commercial gain (for example, publishing a book for profit)

- Photos cannot be used to imply WSDOT is endorsing a product or service

- Photos cannot be altered

Use of WSDOT logo by others

Requests for use of the WSDOT logo, outside of usual WSDOT internal and external documents and communication products, are evaluated by the Headquarters Communications Office on a case by case basis to ensure it is an official business use and in line with WSDOT's mission.

What rules govern the use of the WSDOT logo?

- RCW 42.52.070 – Special Privileges – No state employee can use their position to secure a special privilege for themselves, or another person. That is, if you are willing to let one entity use the logo, you need to be willing to let other entities use the logo in the same/similar circumstances.

- RCW 42.52.160 – Use of Persons, Money, or Property for Private Gain – No state employee can use any person, money, or property under their official control or direction for the private benefit or gain of another. That is, the logo cannot be used to create a profit or benefit for another group.

- RCW 42.52.180 – Use of Public Resources for Political Campaigns – No state employee may use or authorize the use of facilities of an agency for the purpose of assisting a campaign for election of a person to an office or for the promotion of or opposition to a ballot proposition. That is, the logo should not be used to promote or oppose political campaigns.

- RCW 42.52.900 – Legislative Declaration – Advises against any actions which may have the perception of a conflict of interest or improper use. Even if there is no actual conflict of interest or personal gain, there may be the perception of a conflict, personal gain or private advantage from the viewpoint of the public. As a public agency, WSDOT is held to the highest standards of ethical behavior.

CHAPTER 9
VIDEO

The Visual Engineering Resource Group (VERG) provides clear and effective communication of project development, design, and delivery issues through visual media made with a wide range of 3D modeling, animation, video, and other graphic software packages. From planning and communication to design and construction, VERG products are strategic to project success.

Agency Video standards and best practices

- **Safety is my job**
  All employees in WSDOT videos (including the videographer) must wear required safety gear, i.e., hard hat, vest, etc. and follow WSDOT safety practices depending on the setting of the video (i.e. office, at a construction project, etc.).

- **Agency branding**
  All videos and animations should be easily identified as a WSDOT product and include the standard agency opening, closing and transparent WSDOT acronym logo in the lower right-hand corner.[1]

- **Spokesperson name and title**
  The speaker's name and title should use the agency title standard, appear at the lower left bottom of the screen, and disappear after a 2-3 second duration.

- **Closed captioning**
  This is required of agency-produced videos to be compliant with the American Disability Act.

- **Standard intro and outro**
  Use the standard agency opening and closing. Exception: the standard intro and outro is not necessary for 'raw' or uncut footage and videos produced by WSDOT construction contractors (i.e. Seattle Tunnel Partners).

- **Video credit**
  Traditionally known as a video credit, credits should be used only for any royalty free music or images that require credit for use. Do not use credits for WSDOT staff or offices.

- **Engage your communicators early in the video process**

  Contact your communications staff for help with your video. Engage them and technical staff early to make sure your video is consistent with agency messaging and get help determining your goals, audience, scripting, visuals, editing, promotion, distribution, etc.

- **Signed release**

  Be sure to have a video and photo release signed by video participants. If your video involves a contractor, check the contract as there may be implied consent. If other people are filmed while in a public location, a release is not necessary.

- **Review and promote video**

  Send communications staff your video to review and work with communications staff to promote the final product.

Best practices to guide video production

- **Have a clear goal**

  Do not do a video just to do a video. Have a clear goal and audience in mind. Talk to your communications staff to determine if video is the right tool to use based on your goals and audience.

- **Your video intro**

  Intro should be short and conversational. Visually, the intro can show a spokesperson or some other shot related to the topic.

- **Simple is best**

  Videos should have a clear message that you can state in a sentence. Keep on-screen graphics, props, animations and lengthy dialogue to a minimum.

- **Short and sweet**

  Videos should be no more than 1 to 4-minutes long. Create separate videos if it is difficult to keep it to that timeframe. Longer videos do not perform well as viewers lose interest quickly. If the message or customer drives the need for longer videos (such as a training video), discuss it with your communications staff.

- **Stay up-to-date**

  Stay up-to-date with video techniques, technologies, content types and what is popular with online audiences.

- **Inform, educate, entertain**

  Three types of video are consistently popular on the web: informative, entertaining and educational. Informative and educational videos should be our focus.

- **Remember your audience**

  Tailor your video to a specific audience in terms of language and style. Communicate and engage with them in a way they would appreciate.

- **Diversity**

  Make sure your footage represent racial, gender, age and professional diversity. Videos should represent the diverse communities we serve and our own diverse workforce.

- **Interview soundbites should be short**
Visually, determine if you want to show the speaker on-location or in an office environment.

- **Transitional title frames**
If necessary, short transitional subtitle frames can separate subtopics, locations, etc., throughout the video. Use the agency standard for transitional subtitle frames.

- **Sensitive Security Information (SSI)**
Videos and/or video logs should identify SSI information appropriately. Non-disclosure documents should be on file before authorization to review the video is approved. An example of this would be a training video for how to handle an active shooter incident at Washington State Ferries. This video contains SSI and staff that view the video should have non-disclosure agreements on file.

- **Include B-Roll to add visual interest**
These are simply shots of things that are visually interesting and simultaneously support and complement the voice-over, monologue or interview.

- **Maps/charts/diagrams**
Minimize the use of maps, charts and diagrams. Use of these tools depends on the message and what is needed for effective delivery. Maps/charts/diagrams should use the agency standard and color palette.

- **Captions**
The following provides ADA compliant captioning best practices: https://www.digitalgov.gov/2014/06/30/508-accessible-videos-how-to-caption-videos. YouTube and FaceBook have free caption services as part of their video upload feature. These free services do require time to review and edit captions as needed.

Key elements that help us be better storytellers

- **Every story has a beginning, middle and end**
Map out your story in advance.

- **Emotion**
Give our audience a reason to care and a way to connect to the story. An emotion can give us a larger palette, making it possible to show not just concrete facts but the reality of the human experience.

- **Visual appeal**
Video stories need visual appeal. Some places, people and things are inherently more visually interesting. Everyday locations and activities can spring to life with fresh perspectives, angles and composition.

- **Action and movement**
Other media can describe or hint at motion, but only video can really show it. Processes, sequences and motions are made for video. Whether it is someone using, operating, creating or destroying something, video can reveal exactly what the process looks like and precisely how it works.

- **Audio is a crucial element of video**
Interview sound bites tell us what the people in our stories are thinking and doing. Ambient or location sound creates a sense of place. Natural sound punctuates actions and important moments. Narration ties everything

together. Audio often sets the tempo and in many cases, determines how and when shots are edited together. Video is often edited to match audio, not the other way around. Some tips:

- Audio recorded too high becomes distorted. Audio recorded too low tends to drown in noise resulting in static and hum from other on-location sound sources.

- Never depend on the camera microphone to record anything more than the ambient sound.

- For interviews, always use a lavaliere type microphone that is clipped to the person's clothing about mid-chest or use a boom microphone that is kept just out of the frame.

- Whenever recording audio, use headphones. You must verify the sound that you are recording will be good enough to use in your final production.

- Use professional audio equipment for narration. Narration recorded in an office or cubicle on an inexpensive computer microphone sounds bad. There are several professionally equipped narration studios at WSDOT that can be utilized upon request.

- **Editing**
  When editing, use short clips The best videos keep the audience engaged by consistent short cuts that are 3- to 7-seconds long. Nothing will lose an audience faster than a video that runs for a minute and has no edits. Mix it up, use B-roll and keep the eye moving.

- **Events and moments**
  Video offers an unrivaled way to document unique moments in time. We should always look for ways to capture the things that only happen once.

- **People**
  The most interesting stories involve people. Use WSDOT employees to provide a point of view. Draw the viewer into our realm. Do multiple takes so that repetition removes some of the uneasiness. Make sure that you have plenty of B-roll to use as cutaways when you have to edit the interview or narrative.

- **Newsworthiness**
  Give our viewers something new, noteworthy, unusual or timely. Answer the question: why should I care?

- **Settings and locations**
  Consider where to shoot your video and the opportunities and challenges related to it. Consider different types of shots. Wide shots —sweeping views that establish a scene — can tell where a story takes place and convey the size and purpose of a location or project. Medium shots and close-ups can reveal detail and texture providing a sense of a location's age, condition, energy and character.

- **Lighting**
  Make sure lighting is a consideration when shooting video.

- **Stability**
  Use video camera stabilizers like tripods when necessary to minimize bumpy video. Some software can stabilize footage after the fact such as After Effects and Adobe Premier.

Once your video is complete

- **Work with your regional or project communicators to promote**
  Regional, program, project and mode communicators will review videos for audio and visual quality.

- **Post to YouTube**
  Email webhelp@wsdot.wa.gov with a title and description to upload your video to YouTube.

- **Generate more views and conversation about your video**
  Work with your communicators to determine how you can promote your video using the web and social media.

- **Create and/or maintain a video log**
  Create or maintain a video log so that videos can be easily cataloged and retrieved in the event of audits or public disclosure requests. Video creators maintain their own record of the original video copies.

Video Model Release

I hereby irrevocably consent to and authorize the reproduction, and/or publication by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), its licensees and assigns, of the video(s) identified below, in whole or part or in conjunction with other video(s), in any medium and for any lawful purpose, including illustration, promotion or advertising, without any further compensation to me.

I agree that the video(s), the transparencies or digital files thereof, and the right to copyright the same, shall be the sole property of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), with full right of lawful disposition in any manner.

I waive any right to notice or approval of any use of the video(s) which the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), may make or authorize, and I release, discharge and agree to save the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and its licensees and assigns, from any claim or liability in connection with the use of the video(s) as aforesaid or by virtue of any alteration, processing or use thereof in composite form, whether intentional or otherwise.

VIDEO(S):

Description(s):

Date(s) taken:

Videographer:

MODEL: I am over eighteen (18) years of age.

Signature:

Print name and address:

FOR MINOR: I am the father/mother/guardian of

I consent to the foregoing on his/her behalf.

Signature:

Print name and address:

WITNESS:

Dated:

Signature:

CHAPTER 10
VIRTUAL MEETINGS

As we navigate this virtual telework world, we have each learned new technology, new etiquette and best practices for facilitating and participating in virtual meetings. Here are some tips and reminders that you may find useful.

Scheduling tips

- Consider shortening meetings to 50 min. With the number of meetings people "go" to each day, it leaves time for a short break to grab a snack or use the facilities. Try to give a 5-minute warning before the end of the meeting so that any final concluding conversations can occur and action items can be summarized.

- Remember to look at people's meeting calendar, use the Outlook scheduling assistant function to find a time that works for all meeting participants and/or work with their administrative staff to schedule meetings. Try not to schedule over other meetings or create scheduling conflicts without communicating in advance.

Camera tips

- Try to attend video meetings in a quiet space with moderate, indirect light. Make sure your background isn't too busy, and if that's not possible use a virtual background to decrease distractions.

- Turn your camera on and off when appropriate.

  º Remember that there are good reasons why not everyone will want to or be able to activate their camera function. Because many of us are teleworking with spouses, partners, roommates, kids, pets, and other non-WSDOT "coworkers," it's ok if you feel more comfortable keeping your camera turned off during a meeting. Be kind to those who don't wish to turn their cameras on, and do not comment or request that "everyone turn on their cameras."

  º Having one person on camera when another is speaking can be distracting to some, so consider turning off cameras when not actively participating in the meeting.

  º Having many cameras on at the same time can affect the meeting's sound/video quality. If participants are "freezing" or sound is breaking up, turning off cameras can improve the issue.

- Try to speak to the camera and not the screen, we tend to look at ourselves while on camera but when presenting, make sure you look like you're speaking to your audience.

Audio tips

- Make sure to use mute when you're not speaking to cut down on ambient feedback for the audience. If a participant forgets, gently remind them to mute their microphone. During larger meetings, the host may mute those who forget to mute their microphones.

- Using headphones during a video meeting is another a good way to cut down on any feedback from your microphone.

- Take a brief pause after speaking to allow others to add to the conversation or ask questions.

- Because many of us are working from home, practice empathy for those with children. Realize that caregivers are doing the best they can, especially if they have a small child.

General virtual meeting tips

- Provide an opportunity for everyone to contribute.

- If participants aren't familiar with Teams, go over where the mute, video and chat buttons are on the screen as part of the beginning of the meeting and introductions.

- Consider whether introductions would benefit the meeting, especially if participants are outside your team.

- Defer to the host to admit participants in "the waiting room" to keep the meeting on track.

- Open any relevant documents before using the "Share Your Desktop" feature and be aware of pop-up emails and IMs that may be on display. Sharing your document rather than your screen displays only the document.

- If you are wireless, try to remain close to the wireless router. When feasible, choose an Ethernet or wired option for a stronger connection during video meetings.

- If you host a meeting, monitor the chat and raised hand functions and respond as needed.

- Feel free to use the chat function during a meeting; you can send a question or statement to everyone in attendance or privately to a participant.

- If you've used the "raise your hand" button, remember to unclick it after you've been called on. It will remain on and visible to the moderator until you turn it off.

Tips, tricks and best practices for online interviews and presentations

Online media interviews, virtual presentations and meetings are the new normal for remote working environments. And because virtual technology is easy and accessible, it is likely here to stay. Here are some tips to get the most out of this medium.

Before an interview or presentation

- Take care of yourself–take a bathroom break,blow your nose,etc.

- Take a look in the mirror to evaluate whether you need to comb your hair.

- Have your talking points easily accessible so you can glance at them during the interview.

- Tell others in your household you are preparing for an interview and set the expectation you will be unavailable during a specific time frame.

- Log into the interview early to determine whether there are any technical issues that need to be resolved such as the reporters sending you the wrong link.

Consider the background

YOU are the subject. The background is not the subject. Backgrounds should not distract from YOU. Consider these options before you interview or present.

Natural Backdrop: A simple and tasteful background is very effective; plants, books etc. You don't want a messy bed or kitchen counter behind you. A wall full of personal mementos can be distracting. Pay attention to lighting –avoid direct sun or bright light behind you (a subtle light is OK).See more on lighting below.

Virtual backgrounds: Blurring your background can be distracting. If you don't have a nice natural backdrop, use a WSDOT background. We have created several region-specific, project-specific and WSDOT generic backgrounds and loaded them in Teams. They are designed to flatter and not distract. For interviews or formal presentations consider one of the "WSDOT generic" backgrounds that are less busy and keep the focus on you and your message(exceptions include a project/region-specific one that aligns withy our topic.)

How to dress

Simple is best. Always look professional. Clothes should not distract. Earth tones look best on camera. Avoid large pieces of jewelry and loud or herringbone patterns – especially when using a virtual background. Choose light colors but avoid bright white.

Men–a shirt with a collar and tie and/or jacket always looks professional,but sometimes a nicely pressed shirt is fine.

Women–a collared shirt also works well,but you have more options

The technical stuff

Make sure your computer camera is at eye level. The camera is an intimate medium. We don't want to look down on someone or lookup. Use a stack of books,if needed,to bring the camera up to eye level.

Look into the camera during an interview. It might feel uncomfortable, but looking directly at the person who is interviewing you (or in this case, the camera) is the best way to convey sincerity. When making a presentation, try to make occasional eye contact with the camera. Speak to the camera during Q and A.

Lighting really matters. It's amazing how much of a difference lighting makes. Ideally, choose a light room, face a window and place your computer between you and the window. Avoid direct sun on your face, on your side or behind you as it will make your face hard to see. Experiment before you interview, ideally at the same time of day as the upcoming interview so the lighting will be similar. Consider whether a simple floor lamp behind the camera will enhance your appearance.

Frame your shot mid-chest up,with a little head room above. Too close feels uncomfortable. Too far feels distant. Medium is just right.

Medium shot with a little headroom and a clean, simple background

Too close

Sit up straight or stand. Choose whatever position is most comfortable. Just remember to adjust the computer so the camera is at eye level.

Avoid using headphones for virtual interviews. They are distracting to viewers of the final media piece.

Quiet is good. Silence your phone and turn off other notifications. Close the door. Limit distractions.

Is the interview live or recorded? It's good to ask. In recorded interviews, you can always stop and restate your answer. It's not that easy in live interviews (a reason to practice!). If interruptions occur during a live interview,despite your best efforts,it's OK to smile,apologize and carry on.

Do a test before the interview. It's like looking in the mirror. You might see an open door, or notice your collar is crooked,a laundry basket in the background or a ceiling light that's too bright,etc.

Learn the tech. Set up a practice virtual meeting session with a coworker or your communicator using the format that will be used in the interview. This will make you more comfortable with things like signing on, turning on video and a camera before the actual events. You don't want a technical problem to derail you message.

Last but definitely not least-PRACTICE!–and remember, you are always on the record

- No one should ever go into an interview or presentation without a practice session, no matter how much you know. Use your communicator to practice answering questions and setting up for the interview.

- Be relaxed but not too casual–Don't make jokes or off-hand comments because…

- Everything is recorded–you are never off the record.

- Let's say that one more time. Nothing on camera is off the record. Ever.

For those who interview more frequently

Try a ring light. If you interview fairly often, consider using a ring light. It can help remove shadows from your face. A "warm" setting simulates a living room lamp. "Cooler" settings simulate daylight. Try different settings to see what's most flattering. Here are two links to inexpensive ring lights with a tripod and a clip-on. Note: If you wear eyeglasses, adjust the height of the light to keep the ring images from reflecting in your glasses. There's a lot more lighting information online. Search "lighting for selfies" to get started.

Try **a USB microph**one for better audio quality. Here's a mid-priced one but there are cheaper ones on Amazon.