

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
*Visual Style Guide*

FEBRUARY 2016





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Correspondence  
Style Guide  
on Page 46



01

# Overview

### Style Guide

The Style Guide provides a comprehensive foundation of graphic standards for proper presentation of the City of San Diego's visual identity. Use of the Style Guide improves communication by ensuring consistency within an organization and enforces best practices by guiding designs to a quickly recognizable professional outcome.

The Style Guide is derived from two key elements: the color palette and the City logo. Together they provide a unifying theme and position the City as One San Diego, speaking with one, unified voice.

Development of the style guide is grounded in extensive research and testing. Focus groups, user interviews and online surveys captured participant's ideas and opinions. Key decisions regarding content and logo were based on feedback from the public.

The City can push its identity into exciting new areas. However, the identity can only make a positive impact if it is used consistently and correctly.



IMAGE BY: TED MCGRATH

# 02 Values

Design values serve as an outline to follow during the design of a project.

### Key questions to ask:

- What is the intent of the document?
- Will users understand its intent or take intended action?
- Is this the correct approach for the project?

### Guidelines to follow:

## 1 Simple

- Simple visuals are easier to consume, process and remember
- Everything should be visually clear

## 2 Accessible

- Always design within the context of your audience. No one should feel left out
- Everyone should have the resources they need to become a contributor

## 3 Consistent

- Consistent visual languages build trust
- Visual repetition lowers the barrier to entry for communicating information

## 4 Contrasted

- Create a clear hierarchy of information using strong contrast. Things should have differing size, shape and color depending on importance
- Lead the user on the intended path you want them to take—make it overly-obvious

Community engagement throughout the city reinforced the need to adhere to the values San Diegans say matter the most.

### 1 Togetherness

San Diego values community and takes pride in its neighborhoods and military.

### 2 Diversity

San Diego values the diversity of its citizens (and their cultures) and our landscapes.

### 3 Adventures

San Diego values outdoor living, the communities that come with it.

### 4 Singular Geography

San Diego's geography keeps us outside and enables an active lifestyle.



03

# The City Seal

## 3.1 ANATOMY AND ORIGINS

The official seal of the City of San Diego was adopted by the City Council on April 14, 1914.

- A. The pillars of Hercules are used as supporters to recall the ancient territorial jurisdiction of Spain.
- B. The winged wheel represents manufacturing and transportation.
- C. The two connected dolphins symbolize the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, inseparably united by the Panama Canal.
- D. The motto, "Semper Vigilans," means "ever vigilant".
- E. The orange tree represents agriculture.
- F. The Spanish caravel represents the exploration and settlement by the Spanish.
- G. The blue wavy band below it represents the city's position on the sea.
- H. The mission, or carmelite belfry, suggests early settlement by the mission fathers.

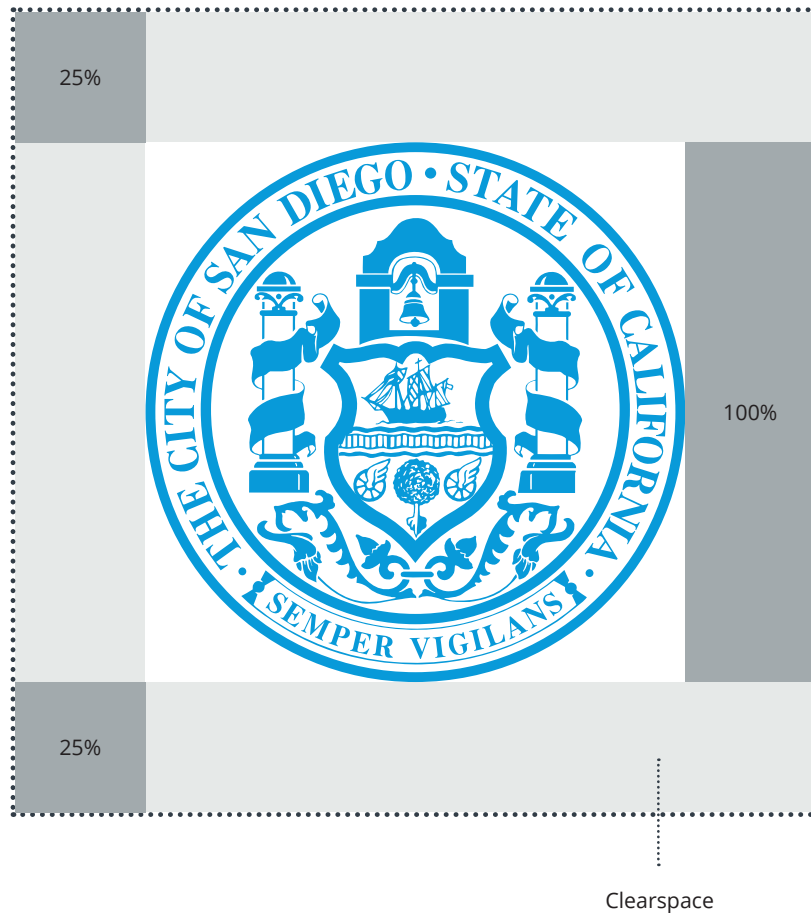


## 3.2 SIZING AND GEOMETRY

In order to maintain the integrity of the seal, the minimum diameter size should be .75 inches for print or 116 pixels for digital applications.

The clearspace for the seal should always be a minimum of 25% of the overall height—as shown here.

For more information on clearspace, see page 16.




Digital Applications: 116px



Printed Applications: .75in

## 3.3 CITY SEAL USAGE

- The City seal was designed by Carlton Monroe Winslow and was originally used to legitimize or validate documents.
- With the advent of the City logo, the City seal will return to its elevated status and be reserved for use on official documents only.
- The seal can be used on reports to council or committee, official memos, letters, certificates and proclamations.
- The City seal cannot be used in conjunction with the City logo.



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

**M E M O R A N D U M**

DATE: January 1, 2016 (use: month, day, year format)

TO: The following are samples when addressing:  
 Honorable Mayor  
 Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 Honorable Council President <first name last name> and Members of the City Council  
 Honorable Councilmember <first name last name>, District <#>  
 John Doe, Director, <department name>  
 John Doe, Deputy Director, <division name>, <department name>

FROM: John Doe, <title>, <department name>

SUBJECT: What the memo relates to


---

One page memo

Sender's full name (optional, sender can sign at the end of his/her name on the FROM: line)

AUTHOR'S INITIALS typist initials

**CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
COUNCIL DOCKET**



**COUNCIL PRESIDENT**

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEM**

**COUNCILMEMBERS**

City Clerk

Council Chambers, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor, City Administration Building



Electronic file of the City seal available for download at [www.sandiego.gov/communications/design](http://www.sandiego.gov/communications/design)

04

Logos

### Logo Background

The logo is at the core of the City's values. The "O" represents a central point of origin, a rally point for all residents to share in common.

The "Sails" wrapping around the "O" symbolize the geography and amenities that only San Diego can offer the community.

This style guide introduces all approved City of San Diego logo versions and demonstrates the rules for both print and digital use. Always use the logos in accordance with these guidelines.

The design language in this document is the primary tool for the City of San Diego to communicate. The face of this communication is the logo. The primary logo, shown here, has a family of alternates to be used for specific purposes. With this family, San Diego can communicate consistently across different media and size requirements.

---



## 4.2 PRIMARY LOGO ANATOMY

When working with the logo, it's important to know the correct terminology. The logo is composed of three parts; the sails, the preface, and the logotype. When all these elements combine—we have the complete logo.

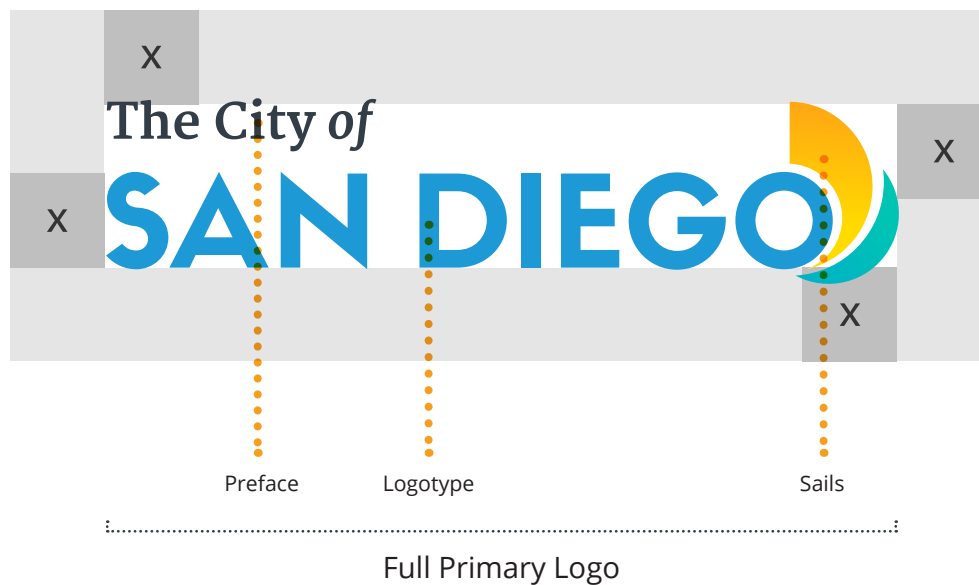
### Preface

For the Preface, “The City” is set in Merriweather Bold, with “of” being Merriweather Bold Italicized.

### Logotype

The Logotype is set in Sifonn Basic.

**Note:** Learn more about typography on page 24.



### Clearspace

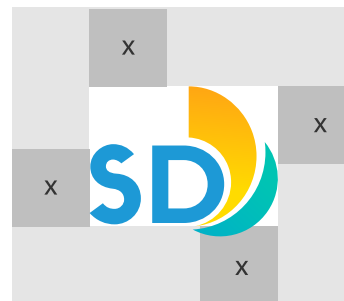
Working with the logos requires consistent clearspace. **Clearspace** is the “blank” space ( X ) around the entire logo that is free of text and other graphics. The clearspace has been set according to specific dimensions of the different logo components. 1x is the minimum amount of clearspace needed.

### Spacing

Spacing of the primary logo elements should never change.

### Units

The method for spacing is measured in relative “x” units. One “x” can be determined from the height of the letter “D” in the logotype.



Electronic files of the City logo in different formats are available for download at [www.sandiego.gov/communications/design](http://www.sandiego.gov/communications/design)

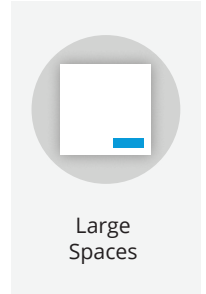


## 4.4 LOGO VARIATIONS AND USAGE

Variations of the primary logo can be used for communicating across different size and media requirements. The content and size should define what type of layout to use.

### Primary

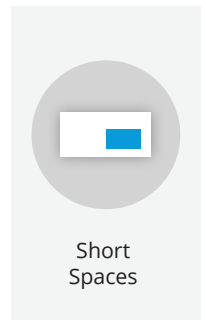
This horizontal alternate works well when the logo is not meant to be the focus of the design, but rather an element of authentication.



Large Spaces

### Alternate Stacked

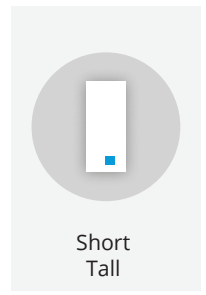
This alternate stacked logo is available for use when the design space is vertical.



Short Spaces

### Alternate Initials

This alternate initials is perfect for small and/or digital applications. For example, on a mobile device when the alternate stacked may be scaled too small to maintain legibility.



Short Tall

### Note:

The color and reverse variations can be applied to the alternate logos.

## 4.5 COLOR VARIATIONS

### Full Color

The full-color logo should be used as much as possible across digital and printed materials. The reversed option (next page) should also be used whenever possible.

### Four Color

The four-color logo removes gradients from the sails of the logo.

### Two Color

The two-color logo uses the black and blue colors from the palette.

### One Color

A single-color can be used for any of the logo alternates when considering printing costs. For example, printing a T-shirt design.

### Black and White

This option is to be used for low fidelity printing. For example, drafts, faxes or receipts.

#### Full Color



#### Four Color



#### Two Color



#### One Color



#### Black & White



The reverse logo version is for use in applications with dark or solid-color backgrounds.

### Blue Background

Full color



One color (reversed)



---

### Dark Backgrounds

Full color



One color (reversed)



## 4.7 INCORRECT USAGE

Using the approved rules and logo versions explained in this style guide will strengthen brand consistency and maintain the integrity of the identity.

Incorrect usage of The City of San Diego identity, as seen here in several examples, should be avoided.



## 4.8 DEPARTMENT LOGOS

The City of San Diego logo can be used to create department logos. For consistency, always use the provided templates found on the next page.

---

One Line



One Line/Two Words



Two Lines



## 4.9 HOW TO CREATE THEM

These department logo templates can be used for creating logos with varying name lengths.

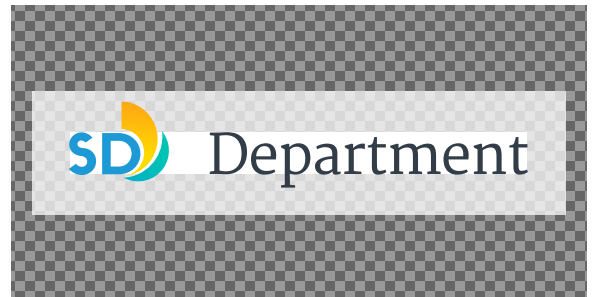
### Do

- Always start with the approved template
- Always keep department names left justified
- Use the font:  
Merriweather – Regular

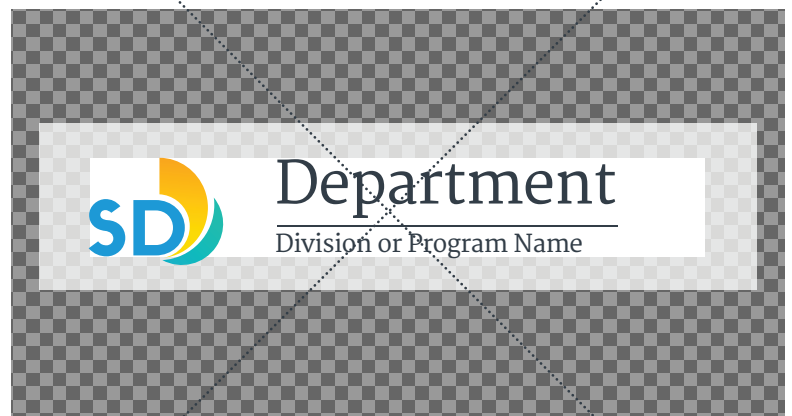
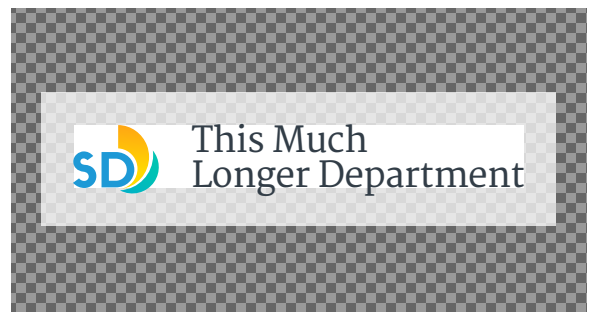
### Do Not

- Don't have a department name wrap more than three lines
- Don't change alignment or geometry
- Don't change or add elements
- Don't break the department name to two lines if the first word of the department name is shorter than the logo
- Don't brand to a division or program, only to the City or department

Template A  
One Line



Template B  
Two Lines



**Do not** expand out to division or program name



Department logos are available for download at [http://cityhub.sannet.gov/dept/comm/c/design/\\_layouts/15/start.aspx#/SitePages/Home.aspx](http://cityhub.sannet.gov/dept/comm/c/design/_layouts/15/start.aspx#/SitePages/Home.aspx)

05

# Typography

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The chosen typefaces to express The City of San Diego brand are the full typeface families of Merriweather and Open Sans. Both fonts are available on city computers.

---

### Merriweather

This serif typeface family is intended for body copy and text applications. Ten point is the acceptable standard font size.

Aa

#### LIGHT

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890

#### REGULAR

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890

#### ITALIC

*ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ*  
*abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz*  
*1234567890*

---

### Open Sans

This typeface family is for body copy and for all headlines.

Aa

#### REGULAR

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890

#### ITALIC:

*ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ*  
*abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz*  
*1234567890*

#### BOLD

**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**  
**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**1234567890**



## Print Type Styles

These examples show print type styles and are what compose the type in this document.

---

Open Sans Semi Bold - 64	<b>Main Title</b>
Open Sans Reg - 48	<b>Headline</b>
Open Sans Bold - 15	<b>SUBHEAD</b>
Open Sans Bold - 13	<b>Subhead</b>
Merriweather Reg - 10	Paragraph
Merriweather Reg - 8	Small Paragraph or Call-Out

Merriweather Regular - 10pt.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet,  
consectetur adipiscing elit, sed  
do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut  
labore et dolore magna aliqua.

Open Sans Regular - 10pt.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet,  
consectetur adipiscing elit, sed  
do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut  
labore et dolore magna aliqua.

06

# Color Palette

### Inspiration

San Diego’s natural beauty is world-renowned. This, paired with its warm atmosphere, are the foundation and inspiration for the brand colors.

The color palette includes a dominant blue, a complementary gold, and supporting secondary neutral tones.

---



IMAGE BY: MICHAEL MATTI



## 6.2 PRIMARY PALETTE

Color matters. Always use the appropriate version of the color palette for your needs. The four versions are:

### Pantone (PMS)

Pantone colors, also known as the Pantone Matching System, is a universal color system that will ensure all vendors produce the same colors.

### CMYK

Process color, otherwise known as four-color process or CMYK, is a blend of four standard ink colors; Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Key Black. These are a printer's primaries and can be combined to create the majority of visible ink colors.






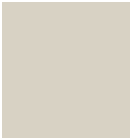





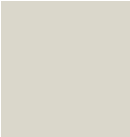

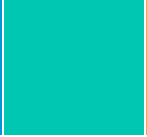



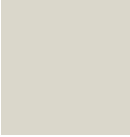

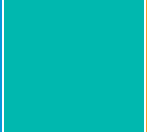



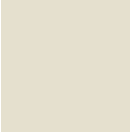
### RGB

RGB color is the spectrum of visible colors that are emitted by a digital monitor. In other words, RGB is a light based mode of color. RGB color is best used for websites, digital publications, and desktop wallpapers

### Hex

Hexadecimal numbers, or "HEX" numbers, are a base-16 numbering system used to define colors on Web pages. A HEX number is written from 0-9 and then A-F.

---

PMS					White (paper)		
	2925	3265	1375	108		432	7527
RGB					255, 255, 255		
	0, 152, 219	0, 199, 178	255, 158, 23	252, 217, 0		55, 66, 74	218, 215, 203
HEX					#ffffff		
	#0098db	#00c7b2	#ffa02f	#fcd900		#37424a	#dad7cb
CMYK					0, 0, 0, 0		
	84, 21, 0, 0	76, 0, 38, 0	0, 45, 95, 0	0, 6, 95, 0		67, 45, 27, 70	3, 4, 14, 8

## 6.3 SECONDARY PALETTE

<b>PMS</b>	2945	3295	1395	110	Cool Gray 9	433	7529
<b>RGB</b>	0, 84, 159	0, 123, 105	156, 97, 20	215, 169, 0	116, 118, 120	27, 36, 42	189, 177, 166
<b>HEX</b>	#00549f	#007b69	#9c6114	#d7a900	#747678	#1b242a	#bdb1a6
<b>CMYK</b>	100, 52, 2, 12	100, 5, 51, 23	10, 51, 100, 36	2, 24, 100, 7	29, 23, 16, 51	90, 69, 40, 89	7, 14, 20, 21
<b>PMS</b>	2935	2985	1385	109	Cool Gray 6	431	7528
<b>RGB</b>	0, 91, 187	0, 149, 129	212, 118, 0	254, 209, 0	173, 175, 175	94, 106, 113	202, 292, 182
<b>HEX</b>	#005bbb	#009581	#d47600	#fed100	#adafaf	#5d676f	#cac0b6
<b>CMYK</b>	100, 52, 0, 0	97, 1, 49, 3	0, 56, 100, 7	0, 10, 100, 0	18, 11, 8, 23	45, 27, 17, 51	5, 10, 17, 15
<b>PMS</b>	2915	3245	1365	100	Cool Gray 1	427	7527
<b>RGB</b>	94, 182, 228	128, 224, 211	255, 182, 82	243, 236, 122	224, 225, 221	209, 212, 211	218, 215, 203
<b>HEX</b>	#5eb6e4	#80e0d3	#ffb652	#f3ec7a	#e0e1dd	#d1d4d3	#dad7cb
<b>CMYK</b>	61, 7, 0, 0	45, 0, 21, 0	0, 33, 75, 0	0, 0, 58, 0	3, 2, 4, 5	7, 3, 4, 5	3, 4, 14, 8

# 6.4 COLOR PAIRINGS

The primary palette can be broken into pairings to best meet the needs of a design. As a general rule, start with the dominant color that best matches the tone of the main image in a design. For example, if a photo has primarily cool tones, start with Palette 1.

These pairings are comprised of a dominant analogous set with a single complimentary color from the primary palette. This complimentary color is used among the set to highlight or distinguish elements within a design.

These pairings represent the only approved color palettes. New palettes should not be created.

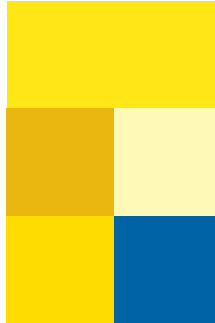


# 6.5 COLOR TONES

These examples show how the palettes can be paired with the existing tone of photography.



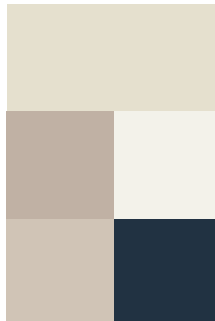
**Palette 1**  
Sea



**Palette 4**  
Sunrise



**Palette 5**  
Classic



**Palette 6**  
Urban





## 6.6 COLOR TONE EXAMPLES





07

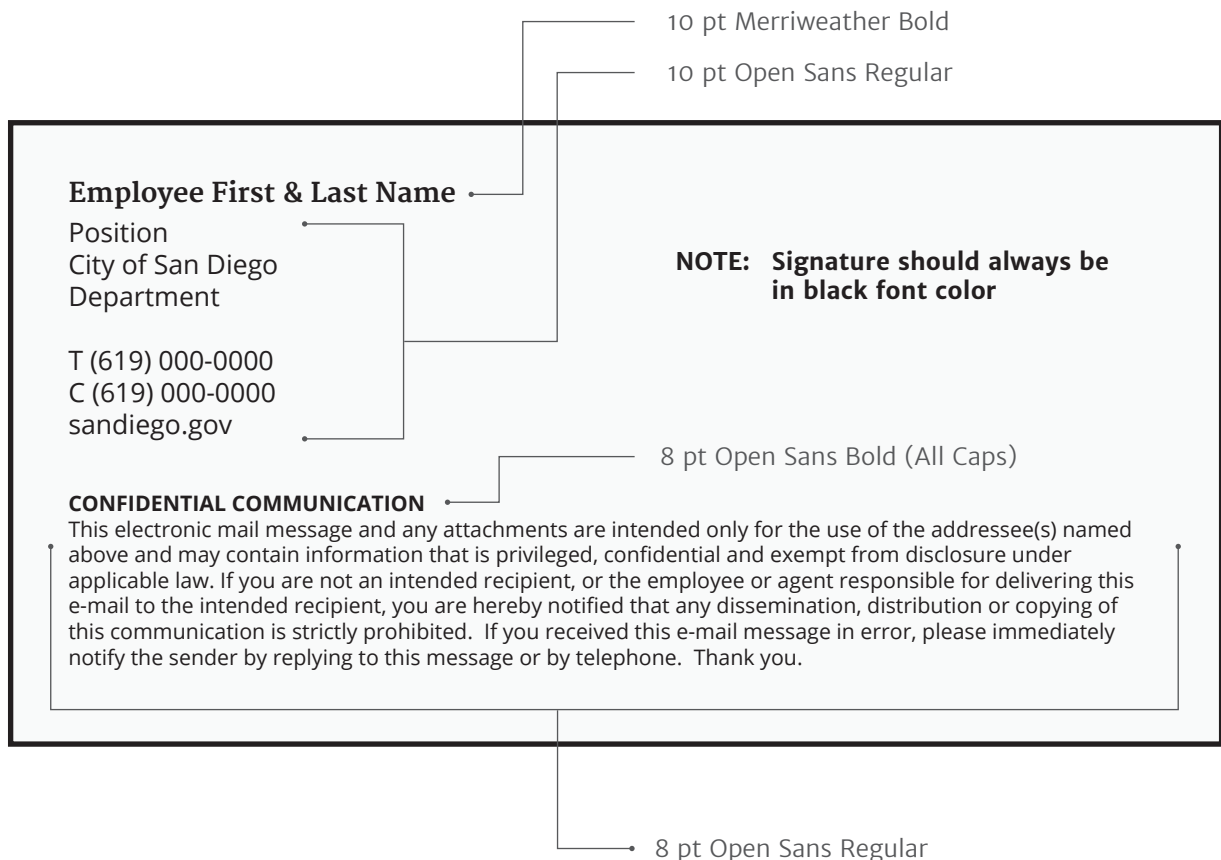
# Email Signature

## Standard Email Signature

Email is an acceptable form of communication in the City. However, it is important to remember that the tone and format of the email represents the City as an organization, and must always be professional.

A consistent email signature that follows the Visual Style Guide standards adds a professional touch and an immediate connection to the City brand. All City employees should use the email signature block provided below.

PLEASE NOTE: Personal quotes, graphics and social media icons should not be used in the email signature. However, it is permissible to add certain standardized language, such as legal disclosure policies or requests to minimize paper usage.



08

# Charts, Graphs and Maps

# 8.1 CHARTS AND GRAPHS

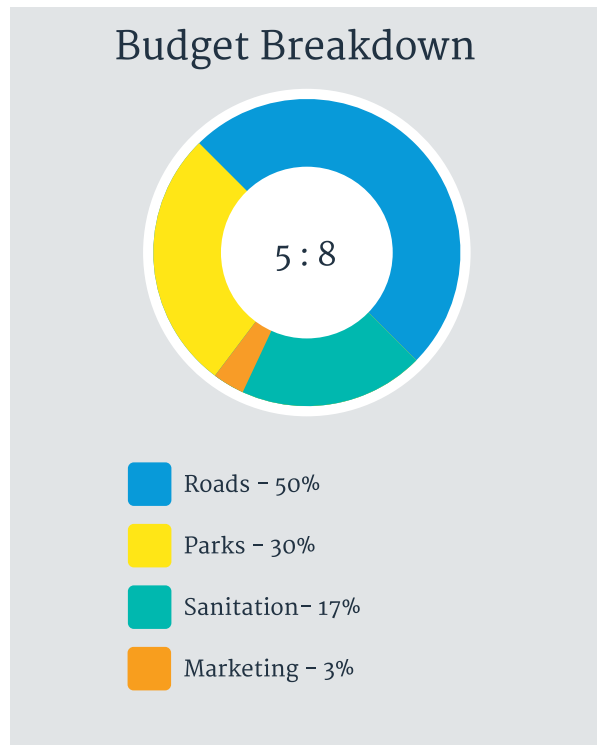
Simplicity is key to data communication. These examples are characterized by simple lines, colors and shapes. Do not add flourishes beyond necessity. For larger number displays use the Merriweather typeface found on page 24.

## Principles

1. Always maintain high contrast for low light screens and the visually impaired.
2. Whenever possible alternate between warm and cool colors. This will ensure maximum legibility. See the color palette on page 27 and 28.
3. Be bold. Use thick shapes and lines.

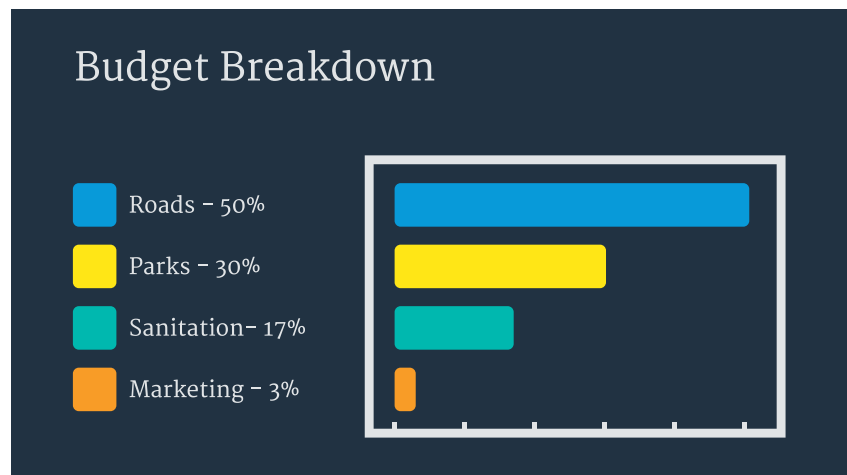
### Pie Chart

Pie charts should always be accompanied with a key



### Bar Graph

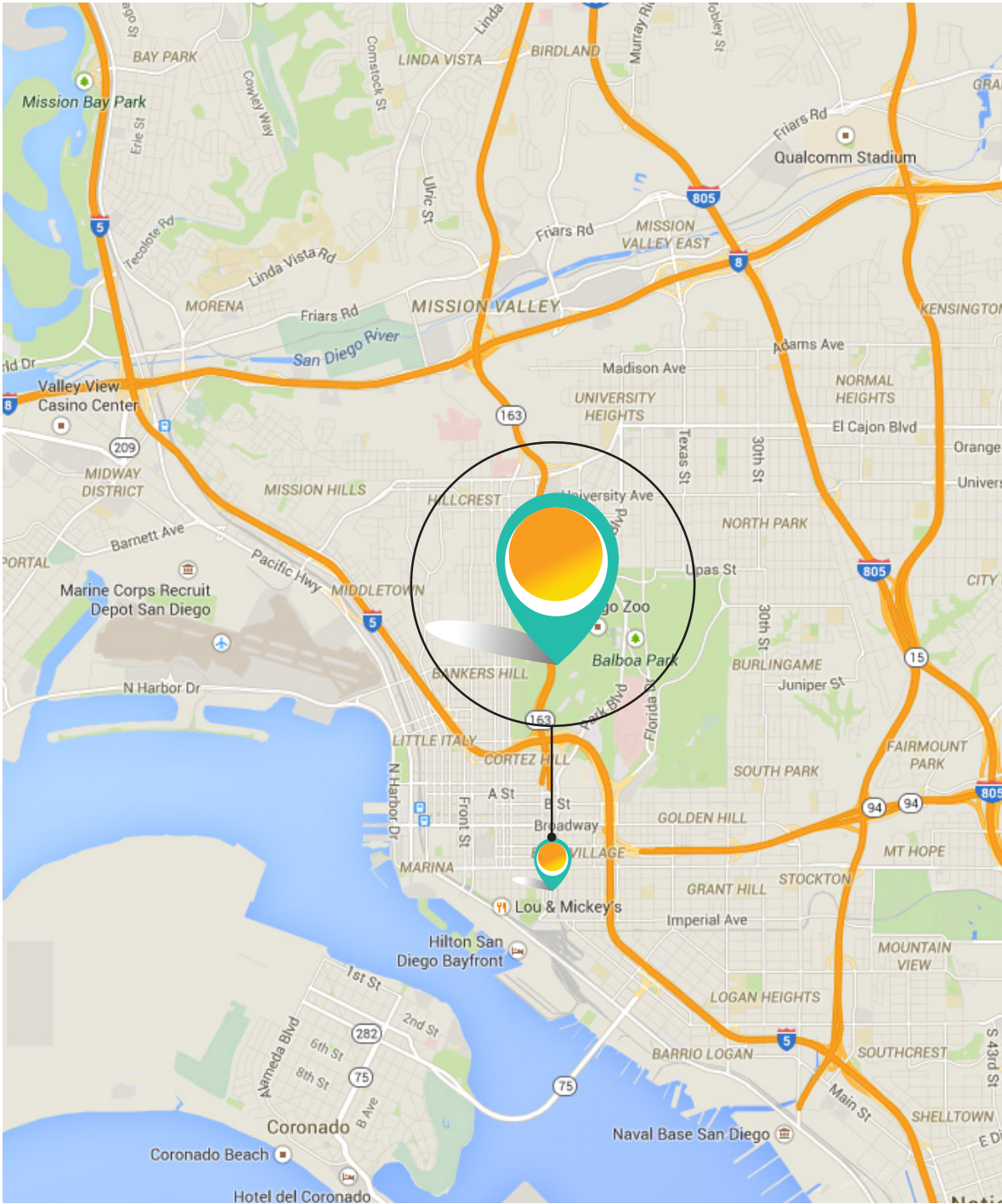
Bar graphs should always be accompanied with a key



# 8.2 DIGITAL MAPS

For digital applications, it is recommended to use Google Maps. It is free, reliable and familiar to most users. When appropriate, take advantage of the custom color options available within the Google Maps API.

A custom branded map pin can be used when applicable as shown here.



09

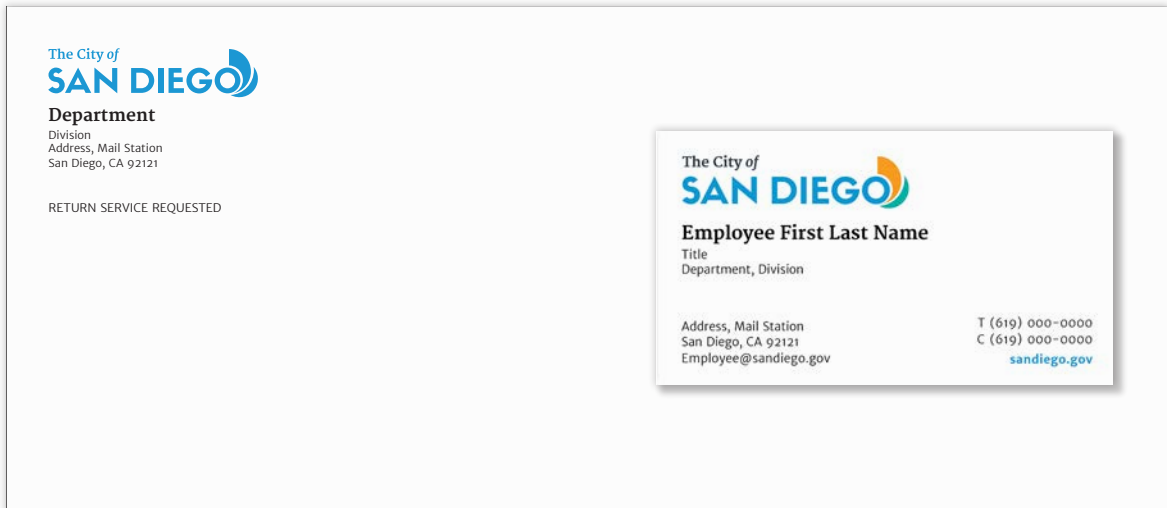
# Design Samples and Templates



**Department**  
Division

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.

Sed ut perspiciatis unde omnis iste natus error sit voluptatem accusantium doloremque laudantium, totam rem aperiam, eaque ipsa quae ab illo inventore veritatis et quasi architecto beatae vitae dicta sunt explicabo. Nemo enim ipsam voluptatem quia voluptas sit aspernatur aut odit aut fugit, sed quia consequuntur magni dolores eos qui ratione voluptatem sequi nesciunt. Neque porro quisquam est, qui dolorem ipsum quia dolor sit amet, consectetur, adipisci velit, sed quia non numquam eius modi tempora incidunt ut labore et dolore magnam aliquam quaerat voluptatem. Ut enim ad minima veniam, quis nostrum exercitationem ullam corporis suscipit



amet, consectetur, adipisci velit, sed quia non numquam eius modi tempora incidunt ut labore et dolore magnam aliquam quaerat voluptatem. Ut enim ad minima veniam, quis nostrum exercitationem ullam corporis suscipit

John Doe

Address, Mail Station  
San Diego, CA 92121  
department@san diego.gov

T (619) 533-5555  
sandiego.gov



Letterhead template is available for download at [http://cityhub.sannet.gov/dept/comm/c/design/\\_layouts/15/start.aspx#/SitePages/Home.aspx](http://cityhub.sannet.gov/dept/comm/c/design/_layouts/15/start.aspx#/SitePages/Home.aspx)



# 9.2 POWERPOINT AND VIDEO GRAPHICS

## PowerPoint Sample

Department

# This Much Longer Main Title



Title page

SD Department

## Headline

### Subhead/Intro

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sandiego.gov

Headline and subhead with text and graphics

SD Department

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- ◆ MUSEUM   
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- ◆ PERFORMING ARTS   
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- ◆ GARDENS   
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- ◆ ATTRACTIONS   
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- ◆ DECEMBER NIGHTS   
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- ◆ RECREATION   
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sandiego.gov

Bulleted items

SD Department

### Subhead

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**TABLE A - 10 Year Report**

	December Nights	Earth Day	Regular Day
2016	21.03	29.50	34.61
2015	22.26	24.75	25.05
2014	29.50	32.84	34.61
2013	46.04	51.33	54.18
2012	66.72	74.43	78.64
2011	115.32	128.74	136.13
2010	184.59	205.15	218.08
2009	356.23	397.94	421.11
2008	563.03	629.02	665.74
2007	804.98	899.38	951.95

>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit.

**TABLE B - 5 Year Report**

	December Nights	Earth Day	Regular Day
2016	21.03	29.50	34.61
2015	22.26	24.75	25.05
2014	29.50	32.84	34.61
2013	46.04	51.33	54.18
2012	66.72	74.43	78.64

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Text and tables

SD Department

### Subhead

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— BALBOA PARK VISITOR

sandiego.gov

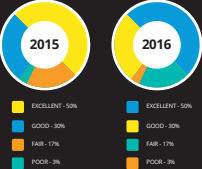
Subhead with reversed text and quote

SD This Much Longer Department Name

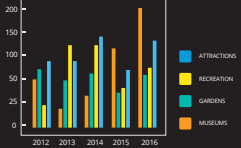
### Subhead

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**Visitors Survey**



**Major Events Attendance**



SOURCE: LOREM IPSUM DOLOR

sandiego.gov

Chart and infographics



CityTV Live Broadcast Graphics

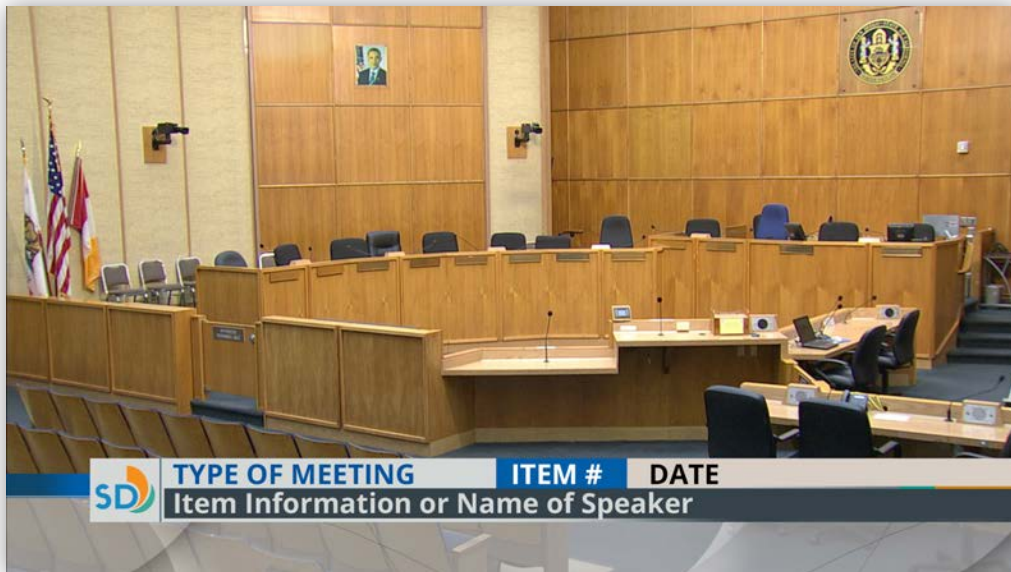


City Council Graphic



Open Graphic

CityTV Graphics Template



City Council Meeting Graphic - Template

## Title Page

**Department:**  
25 pt Merriweather  
Regular

**Main Title:**  
40 pt Open Sans

Department

# This Much Longer Main Title



## White Background

**Headline:**  
40 pt Open Sans

**Subhead:**  
28 pt Open Sans

**Body Text:**  
18 pt Open Sans

**Clearspace:**  
Image and text should maintain a minimum 0.5 in. space

SD Department

## Headline

### Subhead/Intro

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sandiego.gov

## Dark Background

**Department:**  
Merriweather  
25 pt. One Line Name

16 pt./20pt. Line Spacing  
for Longer Department  
Name



**A template is available for download at [http://cityhub.sannet.gov/dept/comm/c/design/\\_layouts/15/start.aspx#/SitePages/Home.aspx](http://cityhub.sannet.gov/dept/comm/c/design/_layouts/15/start.aspx#/SitePages/Home.aspx)**

SD This Much Longer Department Name

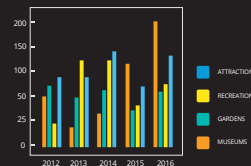
### Subhead

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Visitors Survey



Major Events Attendance



SOURCE: LOREM IPSUM DOLOR

sandiego.gov





Public Works Department

**FACT SHEET**



Park and Recreation

**FACT SHEET**



Public Utilities Department

**FACT SHEET**

## Sewer Group Job 525

### Background

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### Project Overview

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- Velit esse quam nihil molestiae consequatur, vel illum qui dolorem eum fugiat quo voluptas

### Project Schedule

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9192 Topaz Way

500 Park Blvd,

9192 Topaz Way, San Diego, CA 92123 | (858) 292-6300 | fax: (858) 292-6310 | sandiego.gov/publicutilities

# FACT SHEET TEMPLATE

**Graphics:**  
Six photos that best represent the department. Images should be 300 dpi resolution.

**Header and Additional Page(s) Call Out**  
10 pt. Merriweather  
(Reversed out text)

Second Page



Page 2: Sewer Group Job 525 Project Schedule and Overview



Front Page



Public Utilities Department

**FACT SHEET**

**Department:**  
20 pt. Merriweather  
(Black Font)

**Title Box:**  
24 pt. Open Sans  
(Reversed out text)

## Sewer Group Job 525

### Background

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.

### Project Overview

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- Numquam eius modi tempora incidunt ut labore et dolore magnam aliquam quaerat
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- Nisi ut aliquid ex ea commodi consequatur? Quis autem vel eum iure reprehenderit qui in ea
- Velit esse quam nihil molestiae consequatur, vel illum qui dolorem eum fugiat quo voluptas

### Project Schedule

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**Margins:**  
Left - 1.5 inches  
Right - 0.75 inch

**Text Box for Address, Phone, Fax and Email:**  
9 pt.  
Merriweather

9192 Topaz Way, San Diego, CA 92123 | (858) 292-6300 | fax: (858) 292-6310 | sandiego.gov/publicutilities



Fact sheet template is available for download at [http://cityhub.sannet.gov/dept/comm/c/design/\\_layouts/15/start.aspx#/SitePages/Home.aspx](http://cityhub.sannet.gov/dept/comm/c/design/_layouts/15/start.aspx#/SitePages/Home.aspx)







10

# Correspondence Style Guide

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## SECTION I

### STANDARDIZED DOCUMENT CHARACTERISTICS

**FONT STYLE** – The standard font style for text is Merriweather. Open Sans is to be used for headlines, but can also be used for the body of a document. Reference the Visual Style Guide for headline font sizing.

**FONT SIZE** - The required font size is 10 point.

**JUSTIFICATION** - Left justification is required on documents.

**MARGINS** - Margins on letters, memoranda and reports shall be, as a minimum:

- 1 inch - Top (except for page 1 for letters and City Council Reports)
- 1 inch - Bottom
- 1 inch - Sides

**DISTRIBUTION OF DOCUMENTS** – When sending memos and letters electronically, the final signed document should be scanned and sent as an attached PDF document, not as a Word document.

**NOTE:** This manual is largely based on Merriam-Webster’s Secretarial Handbook, which is available at City libraries and for purchase online.

## SECTION II

### INDIVIDUAL PARTS OF A BUSINESS LETTER

The City of San Diego standardized letter style is the Block Letter, with mixed punctuation. Letters are to be formatted per the templates and printed on hardcopy letterhead for finalization.

**DATE LINE** - Begin typing the date line eight spaces below the last line of the printed letterhead. If the letter is a very short letter, center it on the page so that it looks professional.

The date line consists of the month, the day, and the year (e.g., January 1, 2016).  
Abbreviations and ordinals (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>) are never used.

**SPECIAL MAILING NOTATIONS** - If a letter is to be sent by any method other than by regular mail, that fact is indicated on the letter itself and on the envelope. The all-capitalized special mailing notation, such as CERTIFIED MAIL, SPECIAL DELIVERY or VIA FACSIMILE, is typed flush left about four lines below the line on which the date appears (this may vary with letter length, i.e.; more space for short or medium letters) and two lines above the first line of the inside address. Including the actual FAX number with area code on the letter is optional, as is including the certification number for certified mail.

January 1, 201-

VIA FACSIMILE TO (212) 555-5555

Mr. John Doe  
Director  
XYZ Corporation  
1234 Some Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

**ON-ARRIVAL NOTATIONS** - The on-arrival notations that may be included in the letter itself and on the envelope are PERSONAL and CONFIDENTIAL.

PERSONAL indicates that the letter may be opened and read only by its addressee.

CONFIDENTIAL indicates that the letter may be opened and read by its addressee and/or any other persons authorized to view such material.

These all-capitalized notations are usually positioned four spaces after the date.

January 1, 201-

CERTIFIED MAIL  
CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. John Doe, Director  
XYZ Corporation  
1234 Some Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

**INSIDE ADDRESS** -The inside address is single-spaced, placed about three to eight lines below the date, and is typed flush left. An inside address is comprised of no more than five typed lines. No line should overrun the center of the page.

**VIA EMAIL** - If the addressee has provided only an email address, type the email address on the line below recipient's name.

If known, a courtesy title (such as Mr., Ms., Mrs., Miss, Dr.) should be typed before the addressee's full name. The addressee's professional title is typed next to or below the name.

Lengthy organizational names or business titles must be carried over to a second line and indented two spaces from the left margin.

Names of cities should be typed out in full, followed by a comma. It is recommended that the two-letter state abbreviation be used, followed by two spaces before the zip code.

January 1, 201-

Mr. John Doe, Director  
Regional Water Quality  
Control Board  
1234 Some Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

January 1, 201-

Mr. John Doe  
Director  
XYZ Corporation  
1234 Some Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

**ATTENTION LINE** - If the writer wishes to use an attention line, it is typed two lines after the address, flush-left, initial caps, and is not bolded. The word "Attention" is not abbreviated. If addressee's gender is unknown, see Addendum No. 1 for gender-neutral language.

XYZ Corporation  
1234 Some Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

Attention: Mr. John Doe

Dear XYZ Corporation:

**REFERENCE/SUBJECT LINE** - If the writer wishes to use a reference line, it is typed two lines below the attention line (if an attention line is used) and two lines above the salutation line. If an attention line is not used, the reference line is typed two lines below the last line of the inside address. (See sample below)

XYZ Corporation  
1234 Some Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

Attention: Mr. John Doe

Reference/Subject: Municipal Code Section 64.0501, Permit for Industrial Wastewater Discharge

Dear XYZ Corporation:

**SALUTATION** - The salutation is typed flush left, two lines below the last line of the inside address, or the attention line, if one is used. The salutation is followed by a colon. Refer to Merriam-Webster’s Secretarial Handbook for instructions on selecting salutations for persons requiring special courtesy due to their office, rank or profession. If addressee’s gender is unknown, see Addendum No. 1 for bias-free language.

Mr. John Doe, Director  
XYZ Corporation  
1234 Some Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Mr. Doe:

If the person signing the letter and the addressee are on a first name basis, the following form of salutation may be used.

Mr. John Doe, Director  
XYZ Corporation  
1234 Some Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear John:

**BODY OF THE LETTER** - The body of the letter should begin two lines below the salutation or subject line, if one is used. Punctuation is placed at the end of each sentence, followed by either one or two spaces. Industry standards accept both, but be consistent throughout your document. Paragraphs are single-spaced. Double-space between paragraphs. See Addendum No. 1 for bias-free language.

Do not separate the month from the day when typing dates. Do not separate the name of an organization.

Incorrect

We have scheduled a departmental meeting for 8:00 a.m. on August 10, 2016.

Correct

We have scheduled a departmental meeting for 8:00 a.m. on August 10, 2016.

Incorrect

The location of the meeting will be held at the City of San Diego.

Correct

The location of the meeting will be held at the City of San Diego.

If the letter is long enough to require a second page, at least two message lines must be carried over to the next page.

**HEADER** - At the top of the second page flush-left, create a header and type the page number, the addressee and the date (see page 59). If a letter carries over to a second page and does not list an attachment or enclosure, it can be a one-page letter. The font size can be adjusted to 9 pt. to fit on one page.

The complimentary closing and signature block should never stand alone. Remember to use page numbers beginning on the second page. Leave a 1 inch margin at the top of the page and include the page number, the addressee and the date in the heading (see sample below):

Page 2  
Mr. John Doe  
January 1, 201-

**COMPLIMENTARY CLOSING AND SIGNATURE BLOCK –**

The complimentary closing is typed flush left, two lines below the last line of the body of the letter.

The signature block is typed flush left, four lines below the complimentary closing. The title of the person is typed immediately below, capitalizing the first letter of each portion of the title.

Sincerely,  
  
Kathleen Johnson  
Director, Public Utilities Department

Sincerely,  
  
Luis Jimenez  
Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Internal Operations

**IDENTIFICATION INITIALS** - The initials of the author (in capitals) and those of the typist (in lower case) are placed flush left, two lines below the last line of the signature block, and are separated by either a diagonal or a colon (optional). Use the person’s real initials, not e-mail user initials.

LJ/agr

LJ:agr

**ENCLOSURE NOTATION** - If a letter refers to an enclosure, the word Enclosure should be typed flush left, two lines below the identification initials.

Enclosure

If a letter refers to more than one enclosure, the word Enclosures should be typed flush left, two lines below the identification initials. Tab once to start typing. Identify enclosures on the letter by number, and mark the corresponding number clearly on the upper right hand corner on the first page of each enclosure.



- Enclosures:
1. Annual Report
  2. List of Major Accounts
  3. Profit and Loss Statement

Annual Report

Enclosure #1

**COPY NOTATION** - A carbon copy (cc) notation is typed flush left, two lines below the identification initials or enclosure notation; if used. Names and titles must be used. If more than one person is listed, type the names in order of rank. The same format should be used for elected officials. Tab once to start typing the first name, so your text will line up vertically. The use of mail stations and/or outside addresses is optional.

cc: Honorable Mayor

Joseph Jones, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor  
Honorable Council President Murphy Hill  
Councilmember Jane Smith, Council District 1  
Michelle Edwards, Independent Budget Analyst  
Robert Lee, Chief Operating Officer  
Kelly Smith, Assistant Chief Operating Officer  
Laura Adams, Chief Financial Officer  
Luis Jimenez, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Internal Control  
Mark Stevens, Transportation and Storm Water Director  
Patrick Talley, Assistant Director, Public Works Department  
Bill Steward, Deputy Director, Economic Development Department  
Carlos Allen, Assistant Deputy Director, Park and Recreation Department  
Grace Solo, Program Manager, City Treasurer Department

Either spelling out the district office number or using the numeral is appropriate.

**FILE NOTATION** - A file notation is optional. If used, it is typed flush left, two lines below the copy notation, if one is used. The information should appear in smaller print (i.e., Merriweather 7 point). If a letter is in response to a route slip (RS), type the RS# two lines below the copy notation using a smaller font (see page 66).

\\wpdocs\manual

File No. 9-20320

# Sample Letters







Department  
Division

1 INCH MARGINS  
(top and left)

### SAMPLE TWO-PAGE LETTER

January 1, 201-

**DATE LINE** - Pg. 49  
should be typed 8 lines  
from the top of the

**ON ARRIVAL  
NOTATIONS** - (Pg. 50)

CERTIFIED MAIL # 0 117 552 421

Mr. John Doe  
XYZ Corporation  
1234 Some Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

**INSIDE ADDRESS** – should be  
typed 4 to 8 lines from the Date  
Line (Pg. 50)

**REFERENCE/SUBJECT  
LINE** – (Pg. 52)

Reference: Public Utilities Department Policies

Dear Mr. Doe:

**SALUTATION** – should be typed 2 lines after  
the last printed line of the address (Pg. 52)

Xxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxx xxxx xxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx xx xxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxx.  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XX X XXXX XXXXX XXXX XXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXX XXX XXX XXXXX  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Xxxxxx xxxx xxx xxxxxx xxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxx xxxxx x xxxxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxx xxxxxx xx x xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.  
XXXXXX XXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXX XXXX XXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXX  
XXXXXXXX XXXXXX XXXXXXX XXXXX. XXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XX X  
XXXX XXXXX XXXX XXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXX XXX XXX XXXXX XXXXXXX.

**BODY** – is single spaced, and left  
justified (ragged right). Paragraphs  
are separated by one line (two hard  
returns) (Pg. 53).

Xxxxxx xxxx xxx xxxxxx xxx xxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxx xxxxx x xxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxx xxxxxxx xxx xxxxxx xx x  
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Address, Mail Station  
San Diego, CA 92121  
department@sandiego.gov

**CONTACT INFO** –  
Open Sans 7 pt. font size.

T (619) 533-5555  
sandiego.gov





## SECTION III

### ENVELOPES

**STANDARDIZED ADDRESSING** - The following instructions from the United States Postal Service should be followed when preparing envelopes for mailing. Refer to the website <https://www.usps.com/ship/mail-shipping-services.htm?> for details.

Always put the addressee's name on the first line. See Addendum No. 1 for bias-free language. If you're sending mail to someone at a company, put the company's name on the second line.

One space separates words. Two spaces separate zip from state. Always use a return address.

In addition to street number, please include the following:

- N (North), S (South), E (East), W (West), NE, NW, SE, SW, if appropriate.
- AVE (Avenue), ST (Street), DR (Drive), RD (Road), PL (Place), CIR (Circle), BLVD (Boulevard), or CT (Court)
- RM (Room), STE (Suite), or APT (Apartment) number.

Put the ZIP Code or ZIP+4 Code on the same line after the city and state.

Left justify all type. Do not insert any punctuation marks in the address block (except hyphen in ZIP+4 code). Information on envelopes should be typed and not handwritten.

See the following samples for placement of on-arrival notations (PERSONAL or CONFIDENTIAL), and special mailing notations (CERTIFIED, REGISTERED MAIL, or SPECIAL DELIVERY). These should be placed level with the addressee's name or the company's name, but never lower than the address.

### LABELS

According to the U.S. Postal Service regulations: "Labels for use on parcels, packages or large envelopes must be addressed according to the recommended format. Labels that are applied must be parallel to the bottom edge of the envelope to be processed by the USPS on automated equipment" (see samples on page 61).

**SAMPLE ENVELOPE**

(Return address)	Postage area
CONFIDENTIAL	MR S ONEILL SEAN ONEILL INC 4321 MAPLE ST ANYTOWN CA 12345-6789

(Return address)	Postage area
	XYZ CORPORATION ATTN MR ALEXANDER SMITH PO BOX 34567 SAN DIEGO CA 92101-9000

**SAMPLE LABEL**

(Return address)	Postage area	
	<table border="1"><tr><td>XYZ CORPORATION ATTN MR ALEXANDER SMITH PO BOX 34567 SAN DIEGO CA 92101-9000</td></tr></table>	XYZ CORPORATION ATTN MR ALEXANDER SMITH PO BOX 34567 SAN DIEGO CA 92101-9000
XYZ CORPORATION ATTN MR ALEXANDER SMITH PO BOX 34567 SAN DIEGO CA 92101-9000		



## SECTION IV

### INDIVIDUAL PARTS OF A MEMORANDUM

**HEADING** - The heading of a memorandum is to appear as follows:



The heading is not to include any reference to a specific department, division or program. (THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO is in Merriweather 10 point, small caps and first letter upper case; M E M O R A N D U M is in Merriweather 12 point with two spaces between each letter and all caps.)

**DATE LINE** - The DATE line is typed flush left, four lines below the word "MEMORANDUM." The DATE line consists of the month, the day, and the year (e.g., January 1, 201-). Abbreviations and ordinals (1st, 2nd, 24th) are never used. Use your "TAB" key rather than the space bar to "tab" over to the 2 inch(es) position so your text will line up vertically with the TO, FROM, SUBJECT lines. If a REFERENCE line is used, use your "TAB" key rather than the space bar to "tab" over to the 2.5 inch position. Do not abbreviate the word REFERENCE so your text will line up vertically.

DATE:            January 1, 201-

**TO LINE** - The TO line is typed flush left, two lines below the DATE line. Type the name and title of the person to whom the memorandum is directed. Examples below:

TO:            Kathleen Johnson, Director, Public Utilities Department  
TO:            Mark Stevens, Deputy Director, Public Works Division



Memorandum template is available for download at [http://cityhub.sannet.gov/dept/comm/c/design/\\_layouts/15/start.aspx#/SitePages/Home.aspx](http://cityhub.sannet.gov/dept/comm/c/design/_layouts/15/start.aspx#/SitePages/Home.aspx)

For a memorandum to a list of people (more than three), the memorandum is addressed to "Distribution" with names/titles typed two lines below the identification initials. See additional information on page 68.

---

TO: Distribution

---

**VIA NOTATION** - If a "via" notation is used, it is typed on a separate line under the TO line or the FROM line, and the word "via" is indented two spaces under the addressee. The following are two examples of memoranda with via notations.

---

TO: Honorable Councilmember Stephanie Powell, Council District 3  
via Luis Jimenez, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Infrastructure/Public Works

TO: Luis Jimenez, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Infrastructure/Public Works  
via Kathleen Johnson, Director, Public Utilities Department

FROM: Honorable Councilmember Stephanie Powell, Council District 3  
via Luis Jimenez, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Infrastructure/Public Works

FROM: Luis Jimenez, Deputy Chief Operating Officer  
via Kathleen Johnson, Director Public Utilities Department

---

Remember to route the memorandum according to the "via" notation. In the first example the memorandum would be routed to Luis Jimenez, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, who has reviewed the memorandum for approval prior to being sent to Honorable Councilmember Stephanie Powell. NOTE: The "via" notation should always be reviewed by the "via" person first, whether it is the "TO" designation or the "FROM" designation.

**FROM LINE** - The FROM line is typed flush left, two lines below the last line of the TO line. Type the name and title of the person who is sending the memorandum.

---

FROM: Kathleen Johnson, Director, Public Utilities Department

FROM: Tom Davis, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Internal Operations  
via Lila Downing, Director, Purchasing and Contracting Department

---

**SUBJECT OR REFERENCE LINE** - The SUBJECT line is typed flush left, two lines below the last line of the FROM line. The actual subject should be typed in initial caps and is not followed by a period. The subject should not be bolded.

SUBJECT: Departmental Correspondence  
REFERENCE: Department Instruction No. 000-00, dated January 1, 201-

**BODY OF THE MEMORANDUM** - A horizontal line is inserted two lines below the SUBJECT line, or REFERENCE, line if one is used. Begin typing the body two lines below the horizontal line (see sample memorandum on page 23.) Punctuation is placed at the end of each sentence, followed by either one or two spaces. Industry standards accept both, but be consistent throughout your document. Paragraphs are single-spaced. Double-spaced between paragraphs. See Addendum Number 1 for bias-free language.

If the memorandum is long enough to require a second page, at least two message lines must be carried over to the next page. The signature block should never stand alone. If you decide to make the memorandum one page, shrink the text to one page by adjusting the font to Merriweather 9 or 9.5 to make it fit.

Page 2  
Honorable Councilmember Stephanie Powell, Council District 3  
January 1, 201-

If a memorandum is more than a single page, add a flush-left header with the page number, the addressee and the date. (Pg. 71)

**SIGNATURE BLOCK** - If the memorandum is only one page in length, the author shall sign at the top after his/her name. If it carries to a second page, the signature block is typed in initial caps, flush left, four lines below the last line of the body of the memorandum. The signature block consists solely of the author's name and title.

Luis Jimenez  
Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Infrastructure/Public Works



**IDENTIFICATION INITIALS** - The initials of the author (in capitals) and those of the typist (in lower case) are placed flush left, two lines below the last line of the signature block, and are separated by either a diagonal or a colon (optional). Use the person’s real initials, not email user initials.

KJ/agr

KJ:agr

**ATTACHMENT NOTATION** - If a memorandum refers to one attachment, the word “Attachment” should be typed flush left, two lines below the identification initials. Tab once to start typing.

KJ/agr  
Attachment: 1. Letter dated January 1, 2016

If a memorandum refers to more than one attachment, the word “Attachments” should be typed flush left, two lines below the identification initials. Identify attachments on the memorandum with NUMBERS, and mark the corresponding number clearly on the upper right hand corner on the first page of each attachment. (See samples below)

Attachments: 1. Annual Report  
2. List of Major Accounts  
3. Profit and Loss Statement

Annual Report Attachment #1



**DISTRIBUTION LIST** - If the memorandum is directed to "Distribution," the actual list of names and titles are typed, two lines below the identification initials or attachment notation, if one is used. The use of mail stations is optional.

Distribution:

Robert Takada, Chief Operating Officer  
Luis Jimenez, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Internal Operations  
Patricia Abel, Director, Development Services Department  
Marcus Cassidy, Deputy Director, Public Works Department

**COPY NOTATION** - Same as with letters; see page 55.

cc: David Kelly, Chief Operating Officer  
Luis Jimenez, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Internal Operations  
Kathleen Johnson, Director, Public Utilities Department  
Mark Stevens, Deputy Director, Office of the City Comptroller

**FILE NOTATION** - A file notation is optional. If used, it is typed flush left, two lines below the copy notation. If the memorandum refers to a route slip, the same applies here as with a response letter (see pg 55). The information should appear in smaller print (i.e. Merriweather 8 point).

c:\wpdocs\manual

Route Slip #05-544-0415

File No: 9-20320

**FILE NOTATION** – is optional. If the letter is in response to a route slip, type the RS# two lines below the copy notation using a smaller font. Type two lines below cc.

# Sample Memorandum



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

# MEMORANDUM

Merriweather 10 point font, first letter capitalized, remaining letters, small caps bold

Merriweather bold 12 point, all capitals, bold, with two spaces between letters.

Leave 4 lines between MEMORANDUM and DATE:

Merriweather 10 point, all capitals and double line spacing. **DO NOT TYPE THIS SECTION IN BOLD FONT**

DATE: January 1, 201-

TO: Distribution The author may sign next to their name.

FROM: Kathleen Johnson, Director, Public Utilities Department

SUBJECT: Departmental Correspondence

Double line spacing between SUBJECT/REFERENCE line and divider line.

---

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KJ/agr

- Attachments: 1. Correspondence Style Guide  
 2. Department Instruction No. 000-00, dated January 1, 201-

Distribution:

- Luis Jimenez, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Internal Controls
- Patricia Abel, Director, Development Services Department
- Jacob Ellis, Director, Real Estate Assets Department
- Marcus Cassidy, Deputy Director, Public Works Department

Names and titles must be used. List in order of the position and title.

cc: Robert Takada, Chief Operating Officer  
 Alex Talley, Assistant Chief Operating Officer





THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

# MEMORANDUM

**SAMPLE ONE-PAGE  
MEMORANDUM -  
VIA NOTATION**

**DATE:** January 1, 201-

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

**FROM:** Luis Jimenez, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Infrastructure/Public Works  
via Kathleen Johnson, Director, Public Utilities Department

**SUBJECT:** Departmental Correspondence

**REFERENCE:** Department Instruction No. 000-00, dated January 1, 201-

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LJ/agr

Attachment: 1. Correspondence Style Guide  
2. Department Instruction No. 000-00, dated January 1, 201-

cc: Joseph Jones, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor  
Fatima Zohra, Deputy Chief of Staff/Chief of Policy, Office of the Mayor  
Dana Milton, Director of Council Affairs, Office of the Mayor  
Michelle Edwards, Independent Budget Analyst  
Robert Takada, Chief Operating Officer  
Kelly Smith, Assistant Chief Operating Officer  
Laura Adams, Chief Financial Officer  
Nicolas Peña, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Internal Operations  
Adrienne Welch, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Neighborhood Services  
Trixie Hammond, Director, Communications Department



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 1, 201-

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Luis Jimenez, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Infrastructure/PublicWorks

SUBJECT: Departmental Correspondence

REFERENCE: Department Instruction No. 000-00, dated January 1, 201-

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Page 2  
Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
January 1, 201-

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Sincerely,

Luis Jimenez  
Deputy Chief Operating Officer Infrastructure/Public Works

LJ/agr

- Attachments: 1. City Council Report 99-111, dated May 26, 201-  
2. Annual Financial Report

- cc: Joseph Jones, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor  
Fatima Zohra, Deputy Chief of Staff/Chief of Policy, Office of the Mayor  
Dana Milton, Director of Council Affairs, Office of the Mayor  
Michelle Edwards, Independent Budget Analyst  
Robert Takada, Chief Operating Officer  
Kelly Smith, Assistant Chief Operating Officer  
Laura Adams, Chief Financial Officer  
Nicolas Peña, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Internal Operations  
Adrienne Welch, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Neighborhood Services  
Trixie Hammond, Director, Communications Department

## SECTION V

### DISTRIBUTION OF LETTERS AND MEMORANDA

**FINAL REVIEW OF SIGNED DOCUMENTS** - Staff who prepare letters and memoranda should have the document reviewed by a second individual prior to final signature. It is recommended the preparer request a Word Processing Operator, Senior Clerk or Executive Secretary proof before documents are signed.

#### DISTRIBUTION PROTOCOL (MAYORAL DEPARTMENTS)

- A memorandum issued by one of the Mayoral Departments to the Mayor, the City Council, or an outside agency must follow the standards described below.
  - The memorandum must be addressed as from the relevant Department Director with a via notation - via the relevant Deputy Chief Operating Officer (or Chief Financial Officer, Assistant Chief Operating Officer, or Chief Operating Officer, as applicable). The relevant Deputy Chief Operating Officer must sign off on the memorandum before it is issued.
  - The memorandum must include the following positions in the carbon copy (cc) block:
    - Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor
    - Deputy Chief of Staff/Chief of Policy, Office of the Mayor
    - Independent Budget Analyst
    - (specifically for memoranda to Council offices) Director of Council Affairs, Office of the Mayor
    - Communications Director
- For communications such as the announcement of a new Department Director or other major departmental change, it is best to include the non-Mayoral departments, particularly the Office of the City Clerk and the Personnel Department.

**ELECTRONIC DISTRIBUTION OF DOCUMENTS** - When sending memos and letters electronically, the final signed document is to be scanned and sent as an attached PDF document, not as a Word document. When distributing a memorandum via email to the Mayor or Councilmembers, it is customary to include their Chief of Staff and Executive Secretary on the email. If the memorandum is sent to a Department Director, please include their Executive Secretary.

**USE OF PROPER TITLES ON LETTERS AND MEMORANDA** - Consistency should be used when affixing titles to letters and memoranda. For elected officials (of any jurisdiction), the word “Honorable” should precede their name. Official titles, not “working” titles, should be used on documents. The title should generally read in this order: Name, Title, Department.



## SAMPLE TITLES

**Correct:**

Honorable Mayor Janice Clarke  
Honorable Council President David Jimenez, Council District 3  
Honorable Councilmember Rita Johnson, Chair, Audit Committee  
Sandra Fong, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Infrastructure/Public Works  
Mark Stevens, Director, Real Estate Assets Department  
Daniel Solomon, Executive Director, Human Relations Commission

**Incorrect:**

Janice Clarke, Mayor of the City of San Diego  
David Jimenez, Councilmember  
Sandra Fong, DCOO  
Mark Stevens, Real Estate Assets Director

## SECTION VI

### EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE

The standards discussed in this style guide should be applied to email correspondence as well as printed material. Email messages, as well as official City letters and memoranda, are public records as part of the California Public Records Act. For that reason, it is important to follow the guidelines of this style guide and proofread email correspondence as one would with an official letter or memorandum. The spell check feature may be employed to assist with proofreading while writing on a computer or on a mobile phone.

#### EMAIL SIGNATURE BLOCK

For information and guidelines regarding the City standard email signature block, please refer to page 34 of the Visual Style Guide.

**SECTION VII**

**ADDENDUM No. 1  
BIAS-FREE LANGUAGE**

**GENERAL OPERATING PRINCIPLE**

The City of San Diego is committed to the elimination of discrimination and bias in all forms. The City recognizes the need to use written and spoken language and behaviors that convey respect and inclusion of all people. We are aware of the need to use language that recognizes our diversity and does not offend, demean or exclude people on the basis of gender, race, ethnic group, religion, age, ability/disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, familial or marital status, class, or political affiliations. Our goal is to encourage *bias-free language* - language that does not create or perpetuate real or perceived prejudice – in our written and spoken communication.

**BIAS-FREE LANGUAGE**

Bias typically involves a leaning or predisposition on an issue that may inhibit being neutral when communicating with others. When bias exists in attitudes, it is often reflected in the language used in formal and informal communication. Being aware and mindful of our language, both written and oral, can help create a respectful and inclusive climate.

This document provides guidelines that will improve our bias-free writing and speaking to assist in preparing official City publications and other communications. It provides some practical guidelines for the use of inclusive language and examples of discriminatory and excluding language. These guidelines change from time-to-time as individuals or groups most often affected by bias suggest such changes. The goal is to be aware and thoughtful as we communicate in a “World Class City for All”.

**GUIDELINES**

**GENDER**

1. Include all people in general references by substituting gender-neutral words and phrases for gender-biased words.

<p><b>Example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- mankind</li><li>- man-to-man defense</li><li>- man the operation</li><li>- manpower</li> <li>- layman’s terms</li><li>- man hours</li><li>- manmade</li></ul>	<p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- people, humanity, human beings</li><li>- one-on-one defense</li><li>- staff the operation</li><li>- labor, human resources, staff time, staff support</li><li>- ordinary terms</li><li>- staff hours, hours</li><li>- manufactured, synthetic, artificial</li></ul>
--	--



2. Communicate to everyone by including both male and female reference points. (Don't assume marital or familial relationships.)

<p><b>Example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You and your spouse are invited</li> <li>- Boyfriends/girlfriends</li> <li>- Dear Sir</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Directors and wives</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You and your guest are invited...</li> <li>- Friends, guest, partners</li> <li>- Dear Sir or Madam</li> <li>- Dear colleague</li> <li>- Greetings</li> <li>- To whom it may concern</li> <li>- Directors, spouses and guests</li> </ul>
---	---

3. Avoid gender-biased pronouns by

- a. Dropping pronouns that signify gender and restructuring the statement

<p><b>Example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Each employee should complete his timecard in a timely manner.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Each employee should complete a timecard in a timely manner.</li> </ul>
---	---

- b. Changing to plural construction.

<p><b>Example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Each employee should complete his timecard in a timely manner.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Employees should complete their timecard in a timely manner.</li> </ul>
---	---

- c. Replacing masculine or feminine pronouns with "one" or "you"

<p><b>Example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Each employee should complete his timecard in a timely manner.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You should complete a timecard in a timely manner.</li> </ul>
---	---

- d. Avoid awkward construction such as he/she), s/he, (s)he, or him/her.

<p><b>Example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As a Commissioner, s/he is entitled to a reduced parking fee.</li> <li>When welcoming a new Board Member, provide him/her a binder.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A Commissioner is entitled to a reduced parking fee.</li> <li>- When welcoming new Board Members, provide them binders.</li> </ul>
--	--

4. Use a parallelism to refer to women and men equally and to make references consistent.

<b>Example:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Danny Jones, a strong participant, and Suzy Smith, an attractive young participant were involved.</li><li>- Ten men employees and 16 female employees will participate</li><li>- Officer Bob Brown and Julie Smith will participate</li></ul>	<b>Recommended:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Danny Jones, a strong community leader, and Suzy, an active community organizer were involved.</li><li>- Ten male employees and 16 female employees will participate</li><li>- Officers Bob Brown and Julie Smith will participate.</li></ul>
---	---

5. Use neutral words for “man” and “woman” in job titles or descriptions.

<b>Example:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Chairman</li><li>- Policeman</li><li>- Spokesmen</li></ul>	<b>Recommended:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Chair</li><li>- Police officer</li><li>- Spokesperson</li></ul>
--	---

6. If a direct quote (derived from research or an interview) offends or inappropriately excludes women or men and is not essential to your document, consider eliminating, paraphrasing or replacing the quote.
7. When choosing photographs or illustrations, consider the balance of women and men. Also, be conscious of the relative positions of men and women and their actions. Nonverbal messages conveyed by portraying men standing/women sitting, men gesturing at smiling women, men pointing to or working with equipment while women passively observe imply status differences. When possible, work with artist and photographers to update graphic content.

**Examples of substitutions for gender-biased terms.**

NO	YES
the common man	average person, ordinary people
congressman/woman	Congressional representative
mankind	people, humanity, human race
man-made	synthetic, artificial, manufactured, of human origin
manpower	workers, work force, staff, personnel
man-hours	staff hours, work hours
man-sized	husky, sizable, large
gentlemen's agreement	informal agreement or unwritten contract
anchorman	anchor
chairman	chair
fireman	firefighter
foreman	supervisor
a man who	someone who
man the exhibit	run the exhibit, staff the exhibit
newsman	reporter
postman	letter carrier
policeman	police officer
weatherman	meteorologist, weather forecaster
workman	worker

**RACE AND ETHNICITY**

1. Avoid identifying people by race or ethnic group unless it is relevant. We don't usually point out that an individual is white or of Anglo-Saxon heritage. The rule should apply to individuals regardless of race or ethnicity.

<p><b>Inappropriate:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Andrew Young, the black mayor of Atlanta, cast his vote.</li> <li>- Maria Duran, a Hispanic professor, spoke to the board.</li> <li>- Alpha Beta Gamma, the black fraternity, submitted an application.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Andrew Young, the mayor of Atlanta, cast his vote.</li> <li>- Maria Duran, a history professor, spoke to the board.</li> <li>- Alpha Beta Gamma fraternity, submitted an application.</li> </ul>
--	--

2. Avoid the term *non-white*, which sets up white culture as the standard by which all other cultures should be judged. Do not use *culturally disadvantaged* and *culturally deprived*. These terms imply that the dominant culture is superior to others or that other groups lack a culture.

3. Refer to individuals as *members of a minority group* or specify the minority group (e.g., Latino) when identity is pertinent.

<b>Example:</b>	<b>Recommended:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.</li> <li>- Minorities attended the meeting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women and members of minority groups are encouraged to apply.</li> <li>- Members of the Hmong and Korean communities attended the meeting.</li> </ul>

4. Stay attuned to the current terminology by which racial and ethnic groups refer to themselves (from Negro to African-American, from Oriental to Asian-American, etc.). national newspapers and university publications are good indicators of preferred terminology. Also, ask people what term they prefer.
5. Attention must be paid to the punctuation used in referring to ethnic groups. When the terms African-American and Asian-American are used as modifiers, they should be hyphenated.
 

**Examples:**

  - She is African-American
  - The African-American student
6. Be sensitive to religion when referring to various ethnic groups. Do not make assumptions. Just as not all Arabs are Muslim, most nationalities and ethnicities will embody different religious practices. Avoid stereotyping a race, nationality or ethnic group with a specific religion.
7. Review written communication and visual materials to ensure that, where appropriate, all groups, women and men, people of various ethnicities, people of all ages, and people with varying physical abilities are represented. City publications should aim for reasonable representation of all groups involved.

## DISABILITY/ABILITY STATUS

1. The terms *impairment*, *disability* and *handicap* are not synonymous. Be sensitive to the meaning of each.

An *impairment* is a physiological condition.

-Arthritis is an impairment in which tissues of the joints are damaged.

A *disability* is the consequence of an impairment. A disability may or may not be handicapping.

-Disabilities resulting from arthritis include difficulty in bending the spine or limbs, and thus difficulty in walking or performing tasks.

A *handicap* is the social implication of a disability; a condition or barrier imposed by society, the environment or oneself. The term should not be used to describe a disability.

-People with arthritic knees and hips may be handicapped by the absence of elevators in older buildings.

2. Use the word disability when referring to a person or people with disabilities. Do not use the word handicapped. A disabling condition may or may not be a handicap. For instance, someone who uses a wheelchair has a physical disability. This person is handicapped when faced with a set of stairs when there is no ramp alongside.
3. When the context calls for discussion of people with and without disabilities, use the term people without disabilities rather than normal or able-bodied. Normal implies that by comparison, people with disabilities are abnormal; able-bodied suggests that all people with disabilities are unable to compensate for their disabilities.
4. Put people first, not their disability. Emphasize the person, not the disability. Use people with disabilities as a first description; then, if necessary, disabled person in later references.  
Example: The visually impairment students used a special keyboard.  
Preferred: The student with visual impairments uses a special keyboard.
5. Omit mention of someone’s disability if it is not pertinent to the story.  
Irrelevant: The new instructor, whose bout with polio left him on crutches, will teach two sections of history.  
Relevant: The author of the text on legal rights for people with disabilities writes from experience. She has had paraplegia since childhood.
6. When writing about people with disabilities, choose words that carry nonjudgmental connotations and are accurate descriptions.  
Avoid: wheelchair bound, confined to a wheelchair  
Better: uses a wheelchair

### **SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY/EXPRESSION**

1. “The LGBTQ community” is an umbrella term used in the same manner that phrases such as “the Italian-American community” are used to described groups with similar, but not identical, backgrounds and social agendas.
2. LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning) is an inclusive term and is preferred over homosexual. Avoid using phrases like sexual preference or the gay lifestyle.
3. “Transgender” is a general term used to describe a person whose gender identity and/or expression is different from that traditionally associated with the person’s gender assigned at birth. When corresponding with or about someone whose gender identity is unclear to you, it is acceptable to simply use the person’s name rather than using a gender pronoun (“he/his” or “she/her”). It is appropriate to ask people which gender pronoun they prefer.
4. When referencing the partner of an LGBTQ person, again, ask what term is preferred. Common terms include wife or husband, spouse, partner, significant other. When discussing families, be inclusive of families that are headed by same-gender partners and recognize the presence of LGBTQ youth in families.

**ADDENDUM No. 2  
STATE ABBREVIATIONS**

**STANDARD ADDRESS ABBREVIATIONS  
TWO-LETTER STATE AND POSSESSION ABBREVIATIONS**

Alabama	AL
Alaska	AK
Arizona	AZ
Arkansas	AR
American Samoa	AS
California	CA
Colorado	CO
Connecticut	CT
Delaware	DE
District of Columbia	DC
Federated States of Micronesia	FM
Florida	FL
Georgia	GA
Guam	GU
Hawaii	HI
Idaho	ID
Illinois	IL
Indiana	IN
Iowa	IA
Kansas	KS
Kentucky	KY
Louisiana	LA
Maine	ME
Marshall Islands	MH
Maryland	MD
Massachusetts	MA
Michigan	MI
Minnesota	MN
Mississippi	MS
Missouri	MO
Montana	MT
Nebraska	NE
Nevada	NV
New Hampshire	NH
New Jersey	NJ
New Mexico	NM
New York	NY
North Carolina	NC
Northern Mariana Islands	MP
Ohio	OH

Puerto Rico	PR
Rhode Island	RI
South Carolina	SC
South Dakota	SD
Tennessee	TN
Texas	TX
Utah	UT
Vermont	VT
Virginia	VA
Virgin Islands	VI
Washington	WA
West Virginia	WV
Wisconsin	WI
Wyoming	WY

**DIRECTIONAL ABBREVIATIONS**

North	N
East	E
South	S
West	W
Northeast	NE
Southeast	SE
Southwest	SW
Northwest	NW

**SECONDARY ADDRESS UNIT**

Apartment	APT
Building	BLDG
Floor	FL
Suite	STE
Room	RM
Department	DEPT







DEPARTMENT NAME  
ADDRESS, MS #  
SAN DIEGO, CA ZIP CODE  
PHONE NUMBER

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