



PBOT WRITING GUIDE

Tip Sheet #4

Style guide for writing common PBOT terms and programs for public communications.

GLOSSARY OF COMMON PBOT TERMS & PROGRAMS

This glossary is the work of the PBOT Communications team, with guidance from the 2018 Associated Press Stylebook, consultation with city staff, and research into best practices across trade publications, mainstream media, and public agencies. Language evolves and changes. Please ask us about any changes or additions you want to see reflected in the PBOT Writing Guide Glossary of Terms moving forward.

AASHTO Acronym for American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. Write out on first usage.

ADA Acronym for Americans with Disabilities Act. Write out on first usage. Note capitalization in *ADA ramp*, *ADA Title II*, and the difference between *ADA compliance* (n.) and *ADA-compliant* (adj.)

arterial PBOT technical jargon for specific type of street. Not necessarily understood by the public. Define and use sparingly.

ATS Internal PBOT term for the Active Transportation & Safety team. Do not use acronym.

BAC Alternatively used as acronym for Bicycle Advisory Committee or bureau budget committees. Avoid confusion, do not use acronym.

BAT Acronym for Business Access and Transit lanes, not bus and turn lane or other variations. Write out on first usage.

BBAC Internal Acronym for PBOT's Bureau Budget Advisory Committee. Write out on first usage.

bike box

bike corral Term not in wide usage. Define first as a group of bike racks.

bike rack

bike-share Use hyphen to match AP standard for *car-share*, *ride-share*, *ride-hailing*, etc.

Bike to Books PBOT program with Multnomah County Library. No hyphens, note capitalization.

BIKETOWN One word, all caps for Portland's bike-share program. Note capitalization in *BIKETOWN for All*, *BIKETOWN for All's Pay-It-Forward program*, etc.

bikeway One word. Capitalized only for branded projects such as *50s Bikeway*, etc.

bureau Lowercase, especially when written alone. Capitalize in formal names: *Portland Bureau of Transportation*, etc.

CAC Informal acronym for community advisory committee or citizen advisory committee. Avoid acronym altogether.

car pool (n.) **carpool** (v.) Do not use *carpooler*. Instead: *people carpooling*.

car-share (n. and adj.) Use hyphen. Avoid using as a verb (I took *car-share*, not I *car-shared*.)

catch basin

Central City in Motion PBOT program. Note capitalization. Write out, do not use acronym.

city Lowercase, especially when written alone. Capitalize as *City of Portland* when referring to the actual legal government entity, not when referring to general things that happen in the *city of Portland*. Also: *citywide*.

city council Lowercase, especially when written alone. Capitalize only when referring to the full formal name of Portland's government body and its meetings: *Portland City Council*. Lowercase *council documents*, referred to *city council*, etc. Do not use *city commission*.

city hall Lowercase, especially when written alone. Capitalize only when referring to formal name of a building or alternative name for our city council: *Portland City Hall*.

collector PBOT technical jargon for specific type of street. Not necessarily understood by the public. Define and use sparingly.

commissioner Lowercase, especially when written alone. Capitalize only in formal titles with the person's name. Also: *commissioner-in-charge*, *commission form of government*, *city commissioners*, etc.

"crossbike" (n.) One word, no hyphen. Term not in wide usage. Use quotes and define first as green crosswalk-like markings indicating where bikes may cross a roadway.

crossing (n.) Used as stand-in term for *bridge* or *crosswalk*, depending on context. Be sure usage is clear and unambiguous.

crosswalk One word. Important to note *marked* or *unmarked* and distinguish from term *crossing*.

curb cut

cut-through (n. and adj.)

director Lowercase generally when alone. Capitalize only in formal titles with the person's name.

D/M/W/ESB/SDVBE Current acronym for the certification of contractors and sub-contractors that meet criteria for being disadvantaged, minority-owned, women-owned, emerging small businesses, or service-disabled veterans' business enterprises. This acronym must be written out in full and defined before using it. Use sparingly and accurately. Do not use older versions such as *MWESB*, *DMWESB*, etc.

DOT Acronym for the U.S. Department of Transportation. Write out on first usage.

drive-thru (n. and adj.)

DUII Acronym for driving under the influence of intoxicants, correct Oregon usage. Plural is *DUIIs*.

e-bike Abbreviation for electric bikes or electric-assist bikes. Note hyphen. *E-bike* at beginning of a sentence. *E-Bike* in headline or formal titles.

email One word, no hyphen.

ETC Acronym for Enhanced Transit Corridors, a PBOT plan in coordination with TriMet. Do not use acronym.

e-scooter Use hyphen, lowercase, to abbreviate references to electric scooters. Use of *scooter* alone acceptable after first usage. Follow same capitalization guidelines as **e-bike**.

farmers markets No apostrophes needed. Singular is *farmers market*. Capitalize branded markets such as *Portland Farmers Market*.

FAQ Always abbreviate, all caps. Plural is *FAQs*.

FHWA Acronym for the Federal Highway Administration. Write out on first usage. Be sure to use all four letters to not confuse with other federal agencies.

Fixing Our Streets PBOT program. Capital *F*, *O*, and *S*. Write out, do not use acronym.

Get Portland Moving PBOT program. Write out, do not use acronym.

guardrail

greenway One word and lowercase, unless in reference to Neighborhood Greenway program or particular branded greenway. Term not in wide usage, define first.

groundbreaking (n.). One word. As verb, two words: *break ground*.

hands-free (adj. and adv.)

HAWK (n.). Acronym for high-intensity activated crosswalk beacon. Define on first usage.

Heliport Capitalize in reference to the Portland Downtown Heliport operated by PBOT whether or not the word Portland appears. Lowercase otherwise.

High Crash Network PBOT terminology. Write out, do not use acronym. Note capitalization in *High Crash Network streets*, *High Crash Network intersections*, etc.

IGA Common city acronym for an intergovernmental agreement. Write out in first usage and use sparingly.

JPACT Acronym for Metro's Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation. Write out on first usage.

land use (n. and adj.)

lane mile Industry term used by PBOT to measure pavement surface, equal to 1 mile of standard-width motor vehicle travel lane. Use this more accurate term instead of *centerline miles*.

lane-splitting (n. and adj.) Define first and use sparingly. Do not use *lane-split* as a verb. Write *split lanes* instead.

Leaf Day, Leaf District PBOT terminology. Note capitalization in *Leaf Day pickup*, *Leaf District schedule*.

LID Acronym for Local Improvement District. Write out on first usage. Avoid repetitive phrase *LID district*. Plural is *LIDs*.

LTIC Acronym for Local Transportation Infrastructure Charge. Write out on first usage. Avoid repetitive phrase *LTIC charge*.

MAX Acronym for Metropolitan Area Express, the light rail run by TriMet. Always abbreviate, all caps, okay to write alone. Otherwise, note capitalization in *MAX Light Rail*.

mayor Lowercase generally when alone. Capitalize only in formal titles with the person's name. Also: *mayoral*, *mayor's office*, etc.

micromobility Transportation term not in wide usage. Define and use sparingly.

midblock

MO Internal PBOT term for the Maintenance Operations team. Do not use acronym externally.

MOU Common city acronym for memorandum of understanding. Write out in first usage and use sparingly.

mph Always abbreviate for miles per hour, use lowercase. Metric analog of kilometers per hour should be abbreviated *kph* or *km/h*. Do not write *kmh*.

multimodal No hyphen. Explain on first usage and use sparingly.

multiuse

MUTCD Acronym for the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways, a publication of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), a division of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). Write out in first usage.

NACTO Acronym for National Association of City Transportation Officials. Write out on first usage.

nonprofit

ODOT Acronym for the Oregon Department of Transportation. Write out on first usage.

online

PAC Alternatively used as acronym for Pedestrian Advisory Committee or political action committees. Avoid confusion, do not use acronym.

PARK(ing) Day National program PBOT participates in. Note capitalization and punctuation.

parking-protected bike lane Use hyphen, or use *protected bike lane*, as appropriate. Do not use *cycletrack*.

Patch-a-thon Maintenance Operations term for concentrated focus on pothole and sinkhole repair. Note capitalization.

Pay-by-Plate PBOT terminology for pay station technology. Note capitalization and hyphens.

pay station Two words. Do not use *parking meter*.

PDX WAV PBOT program to hail wheelchair-accessible vehicles. Note capitalization. See **WAV**.

pedestrian More inclusive term than walker, people walking.

PedPDX PBOT branding of pedestrian plan. One word, note capitalization.

PFC Internal acronym for the Portland Freight Committee. Do not use externally.

PFHT Internal acronym for private for-hire transportation. Do not use externally.

Portland in the Streets PBOT program. Note capitalization. Do not use acronym.

PPP Internal PBOT term for the Policy, Planning & Projects team. Do not use acronym externally.

private for-hire Use hyphen between second and third word only. Capitalize *Private For-Hire* in headlines and titles. Do not use acronym.

restriping (n.) No hyphen needed. Use sparingly when *striping* would suffice.

ride-hailing (n. and adj.)

ride-share (n. and adj.)

right of way, right-of-way Use *right of way* (n.) in reference to traffic laws (pedestrians have the *right of way*), plural is *rights of way*; Use *right-of-way* (n.) in reference to easements, typically of city-owned land. Don't use acronym *ROW*.

road diet Retired PBOT term. Do not use.

road user PBOT jargon. Use *people driving, biking*, or other simple construction.

roadway

RRFB Acronym for rectangular rapid-flashing beacon. Shorten to rapid-flashing beacon, don't use acronym, and call it a day.

runoff (n.)

rush hour (n.), **rush-hour** (adj.)

Safe Routes to School PBOT program. Note capitalization. Do not use acronym.

sandbag (n. and v.)

S-curve Capital S in all uses.

SDC Acronym for system development charge. Write out on first usage. Plural is *SDCs*.

side guard

sign-up (n. and adj.) **sign up** (v.)

SmartPark PBOT-branded parking garages. One word, note capitalization.

SmartTrips PBOT program. One word, note capitalization.

snowplow (n.) **snow-plow** (adj.) **snow plow** (v.)

stairway

stakeholder

startup (n. and adj.) **start up** (v.)

state Lowercase generally, especially when written alone. Lowercase in constructions such as the *state of Oregon*, *Washington state* (when differentiating from D.C.). Capitalize only when referring to the formal name of the government body, statehouse, etc., as in *Oregon State Legislature*, *Oregon Statehouse*, etc.

stormwater (n. and adj.)

Streetcar Capitalize in reference to Portland Streetcar whether or not the word *Portland* appears. Lowercase in generic usage such as *streetcar tracks*

streetlight (n.) **street lighting** (n.) The physical object is one word. Presented as a category, it's two.

TAC Informal acronym for a technical advisory committee, of which there are many. Do not use.

TDM Acronym for Transportation Demand Management, as referenced in city code. Do not use.

TIR Internal acronym for Transportation Impact Review. Do not use externally.

TNC Acronym for transportation network companies such as Lyft, Uber, etc. Write out on first usage. Avoid repetitive phrase *TNC company*. Plural is TNCs.

Tram Capitalize in reference to the Portland Aerial Tram whether or not words Portland or Aerial appear. Lowercase in generic usage such as *tram cables*, *tram operations*, etc.

Transit Mall Capitalize in reference to the Portland Transit Mall whether or not the word Portland appears.

TransitTracker Written as one word, note capitalization.

TriMet Written as one word, note capitalization.

TripCheck Written as one word, note capitalization.

TSP Acronym for Transportation System Plan, adopted by the city and part of state and regional planning requirements. Write out on first usage, use sparingly.

U-turn (n. and adj.) Capital U in all uses.

WAV Acronym for wheelchair-accessible vehicle. Write out on first usage.

website Also *webpage*, the *web*, etc.

WES Acronym for Westside Express Service, the commuter rail run by TriMet. Always abbreviate, all caps, okay to write alone. Otherwise, note capitalization in *WES Commuter Rail*.

workgroup

year-end (n. and adj.)

year-round (adj. and adv.)

ZIP code Always abbreviate, all caps *ZIP*. Lowercase *code*.