

Pre-Submittal Checklist version 1.3 for *Planning Northwest*
Dulce Setterfield, Editor

1. Is the title of an article in ALL CAPS? Yes.
2. Are punchy titles to articles (headlines) okay? Yes; they are even preferred much of the time. Just type UNTITLED as a headline if you prefer that the editor come up with something catchy. A committee report or similar APA business document may call for a more mundane title, though.
3. Announcements and other brief blurbs without bylines aren't likely to need titles. A section header that links to IN THIS ISSUE (table of contents) will direct readers to your content.
4. Is there much space for an optional subtitle within a narrow column? No, so think twice about including one. Use Mixed Case If You Do.
5. Does the byline include your email address? Optional. How about your place of work? No. If that information or other details are hugely relevant for readers, consider adding as an End Note.
6. Is text *italicized* liberally for emphasis or contrast? No, it may be hard to read on a screen. They are reserved for any specific *publications* that are mentioned, and are also used in the *byline* to contrast with the title.
7. Is anything underlined for emphasis or a subheading? No; since hyperlinks are automatically underlined, other underlining is avoided.
8. Are **bold** subheadings, which break up text into blocks, a good thing? Generally, yes. Unbroken gray on the page may overwhelm a busy reader.
9. Are bullets and numbered lists okay? Yes. But more than seven bullets is excessive, from a 'usability' point of view (impact on the reader and quick comprehension declines).
10. Can pictures be used to break up text? Yes, certainly. Use file type and kilobyte (KB) size that suits the specification for Web publishing. However, the number of visual elements per newsletter has snowballed in recent editions so submit your images as early as possible with clear information as to which article they accompany. Due to small format rather than full screen, cropping may be advisable.
11. Check to make sure any and all hyperlinks work properly. Searching the Internet into the wee hours to fix a URL, when the one provided in an article fails, is not fun for an editor and may not yield a result that is identical to your original intention.

continued

12. Don't design a sidebar to accompany your article. A second or subsidiary article, separately titled, is fine and the two articles can be placed one after the other in the newsletter. But at present, conventional sidebars are not featured in the newsletter.
13. Stick to these mechanics, many of which were established by the prior editor, long ago. Don't try to dress up your article with cosmetic enhancements like centering, drop caps, fancy tabs, multiple indents, or columns. Those formatting enhancements may look great on a printed page. Including them when you want your article to be viewed online only makes the editor's job tougher. Whatever doesn't work in the context of electronic publishing must be deconstructed: not a prudent use of precious editorial time. **Note:** Certain exceptions may apply if you opt for an article posted as a PDF linked to a brief blurb on the newsletter webpage. The PDF will not allow for hotlinks and readers will have to use their back-button to return to the newsletter's main page. Palatino is the typeface family of choice, for now, for a PDF presentation of a lengthy article.
14. If you submit a visual element such as a photo, to accompany your article, send it separately from the article, as a JPEG or GIF. **Do not embed any pictures in your article.** You will hear from the Editor if you do. Submit a photo credit and/or photo caption, if called for. A separate document is not needed for such short text items. Just include, clearly noted, in the cover email. But spelling counts, even on credits and captions.

Extra tips: The newsletter is published with Verdana (sans serif) typeface but you can submit using Times New Roman, **Comic**, or whatever is most comfortable to your eyes while you do your final proofread prior to submittal. Typeface/font can be instantly changed while editing. Switching sometimes reawakens visual perception while proofreading.

Do Proofread: That includes spelling, even names, place names, numbers, dates. The editor is not provided with a Chapter membership roster and may not know the right spelling for your supervisor's name, your client's star team member, or anyone else identified in your article. If you want to see how your article will display in a narrow online column, try widening the margins or zooming the type size while you work on it.

Your reward for diligence: Submitting perfect content may earn you the privilege of negotiating an extra day or two beyond the standard deadline for future submittals. Clean copy saves editorial time and keeps hair from being torn out when bleary eyes ache after making countless elementary copy corrections.

Impeccability award: You could be the first to be recognized for reaching the Pinnacle of Impeccability, simply by diligently applying the guidance above, as appropriate to your content.

Stay tuned for a checklist addition or update next year, especially if any changes are made to the established publishing format and conventions.