



Records Management Guidance

Digital Photographs – Naming, Tagging, and Describing

Because digital photographs do not have word searchable content, using file naming and description conventions are important for managing your digital photo files. It helps prevent the accumulation of files with no name or reference to the associated records and enhances accessibility and searchability in your filing systems and Content Manager. Naming conventions don't have to be overly complex. The most important aspect of naming files is consistency. In order to follow one naming pattern through an entire collection of photos, it's important to think about your collection and plan ahead. Create descriptive naming standards that makes sense to you.

Taking and downloading digital photographs:

Good digital photograph records management begins before you even take a photo through ensuring accuracy of photo quality and automated metadata.	
Camera setting:	Set the correct date and time on the camera. This photo data will be embedded as metadata on the file and will be carried over to Content Manager eventually once filed. Accurate metadata on the file will enhance search capabilities.
Taking photos:	Be mindful when taking photos. Avoid duplicates and poor quality photos, or delete them from the camera before downloading.
Downloading digital photographs:	Download the photos directly to the destination folder. Rename the digital photos prior to downloading. Download as an individual file – not as a compressed or zip file. These methods ensure accurate metadata is retained with the photo.

Titles and metadata:

A basic file name should be as brief as possible but include enough description to understand the photo for accessibility and managing retention.	
Title of project, issue, subject, or occurrence being captured.	If the photo is related to a project or specific occurrence (such as a media event), include the official name of that in the title.
Numbering	Include numbering conventions you may use for your work. (Examples: Project File numbers, case file numbers, contract numbers.)
Subject	Include a brief description of the subject in the photo.
Dates	Include the date the photo was captured.



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Additional Metadata	Add additional metadata and descriptions through “tagging” that may not fit in the title. Right-click on the photo, select Properties , then selecting the Details tab. Additional metadata can be added to Tags or Comments – which are imported into and searchable within Content Manager.
Naming Conventions	Refer to our Naming Convention Guidance for additional best practices and options for title naming conventions.
ALT Text	Adding alt text allows your photos to be screen readable. This an accessibility requirement and the text is searchable in many circumstances. Refer to additional information on adding ALT text, alt text - King County, Washington, ALT text.
Example Title: River Waterway Repairs Old Barn Bridge E45678 – 1.12.2024	

Content Manager notes:

Content Manager allows you to add additional information in the notes section for folders, and for the individual ERecord (photo file). The information in the Folder Notes and ERecord Notes should be relevant to the subject, but there is much more space to add detail. These fields are fully searchable in Content Manager, so consider what phrases someone might be searching for in the future when looking for these records.	
Folder Notes	Folder notes should be descriptive of the overall photo project and collection of photos in the folder. It may be helpful to include what the digital photos were used for.
ERecord Notes	You can include additional description of the subject or subjects in the photo that might not be appropriate for a title but could help narrow down future searching.
Example for Folder Notes: River landslide waterway repairs, 4/1/2024-5/1/2024, weather related landslide, contract C098765, CIP 45678, Project Manager Jane Doe, photos used for documentation of damage.	
Example for ERecord Notes: South side of bridge, landslide, exposed pipes, Duwamish River	



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