

Rail/BRT Line Name Research



Executive Management Committee
11.15.18

We've gotten public feedback in two primary ways

Focus Groups

Provides:



























- Foundational insights to help inform online survey and staff recommendation
- Pros/cons of each option and hypotheses to test further
- Initial read on public opinion
- Input from harder-to-survey audiences:
 - Visually impaired
 - Non-English speakers

Public Survey

Provides:

- Assessment of perceived ease-of-use of naming options
- Robust sample
- Input from wide range of demographic and geographic groups

We tested four common naming options

Colors & Numbers	Colors & Letters	Colors Only	Some Colors, Some Areas
1	A	Blue Line 	Blue Line 
2	B	Red Line 	Red Line 
3	C	Green Line 	Green Line 
4	D	Purple Line 	Purple Line 
5	E	Gold Line 	Gold Line 
6	F	Orange Line 	Orange Line 
7	G	Silver Line 	Silver Line 
9	K	Olive Line 	LAX/South Bay Line 
10	L	Aqua Line 	Arroyo Verdugo Line 
11	N	Brown Line 	North San Fernando Valley Line 
12	Q	Lime Line 	Sepulveda Line 
13	R	Lavender Line 	Vermont Line 
14	S	Pink Line 	West Santa Ana Line 

Order of options was randomized

Key Focus Group Findings

- Riders and Potential Riders think the way the lines are named is important.
- Naming consistency across the system is one of the most important factors.
 - Hence the Some Colors, Some Areas option is the least preferred.
- General consensus is that we should make a change sooner rather than later, so everyone gains comfort with it before we add many more lines.
- Most would be satisfied with either Numbers or Letters.
- Readability matters to many.
 - Some mentioned difficulty telling colors apart – e.g. Red vs. Orange
 - Many felt the added point of reference of Letters or Numbers gave more certainty when following signage
- Some (including frequent riders) are confused by the “E” on the light blue dot for the Expo Line and think it stands for “East,” “Express” or “Extension.”

Focus Group Findings – Pros & Cons

	Colors & Numbers	Colors & Letters	Colors Only	Some Colors, Some Areas
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent • Simple • Intuitive to many • Second point of reference • Makes map clearer at end points and transfer points • Preferred by Korean group • More universal for users of non-Roman alphabet languages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent • Simple • Intuitive to many • Second point of reference • Makes map clearer at end points and transfer points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent • Similar to current system • Simple • Preferred by Spanish-dominant speakers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of current system • For some lines, gives a sense of where the line goes
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different from current system • Conflicts with bus numbers • Conflicts with platform numbers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different from current system • Some people try to associate letters with places or color names • Letters often have meaning (H=Hospital, E=East, etc.) • More difficult for people whose languages don't include the Roman alphabet/lack English literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be hard to distinguish between similar colors; color blindness • Only one point of reference • Hard for quick references when catching a train/bus • Multiple terms for the same color (i.e., aqua, sky blue, light blue, turquoise, etc.) • Colors are “just words” to those born blind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent, which goes against key user need • Some names are too long to say • Hard for quick references when catching a train/bus



Metro



Online Survey Methodology & Sample

Who We Surveyed	How We Reached Them
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Total of 3,456 respondents

Los Angeles County Residents:

Metro Riders, n=2,293

- Mirroring On-Board Survey demographic proportions

Potential Riders, n=834

- Mirroring Census demographic proportions minus Metro Rider demographics

Potential Visitors

Non Los Angeles County Residents, n=329

- Self-identified travelers from across the United States and in over 30 countries

Facebook & Metro.net Advertisements to Online Survey, n=3,225

Targeted to:

- Riders and Potential Riders
- English & Spanish Speakers
- 7 LA County Regions

Face-to-Face Pop-Ups, n=231

- 10 events across county
- In English & Spanish

Top States

- New York
- Illinois
- San Diego
- Colorado
- Massachusetts
- Pennsylvania
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Virginia

Top Countries

- UK
- Canada
- Italy
- France
- Brazil
- Argentina
- Australia
- Israel
- Hungary
- Belgium
- Portugal
- Taiwan
- Spain
- Ukraine
- Germany
- India
- Venezuela
- Colombia
- Hong Kong
- Poland
- Slovakia
- Japan



Metro

Surveys were completed across Los Angeles County

Survey results were weighted to mirror population ratios of regions



Showing unweighted number of survey completes

Survey Structure & Contents

Objective: Assess perceived ease-of-use of four naming options

Section	Question(s)	Purpose
1. Set Context	Introduce 2028 Rail & Busway Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To inform and level-set
	Introduce 4 Naming Options	
2. Familiarize	Rate Ease of Giving Directions Using Naming Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To get respondents to 'simulate' using the system
	Rate Ease of Station Signage Navigation	
3. Summarize	Rate Overall Ease-of-Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To provide an overall summary rating
4. Explain	Why Rated Each Option	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To help understand ratingsEnsure no additional considerations have been overlooked
5. Profile	Demographics, Geography, Metro Riding Frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To ensure we survey appropriate balance of demographicsTo assess similarities/differences between groups

Overview of three main survey questions

EASE OF GIVING DIRECTIONS

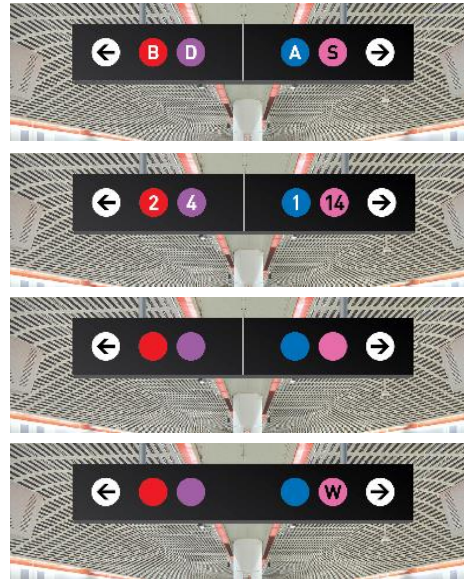
Based on the **[NAMING OPTION]** line names, how easy would it be to give a friend directions from **[LOCATION]** to **[LOCATION]**?



4 routes rotated between naming options

SIGNAGE EASE-OF-USE

Imagine you were rushing to catch a train and only had a second to glance up at a sign to see which way to go. For each sign shown below, how easy would it be to determine which way to go?



Order of naming options was randomized

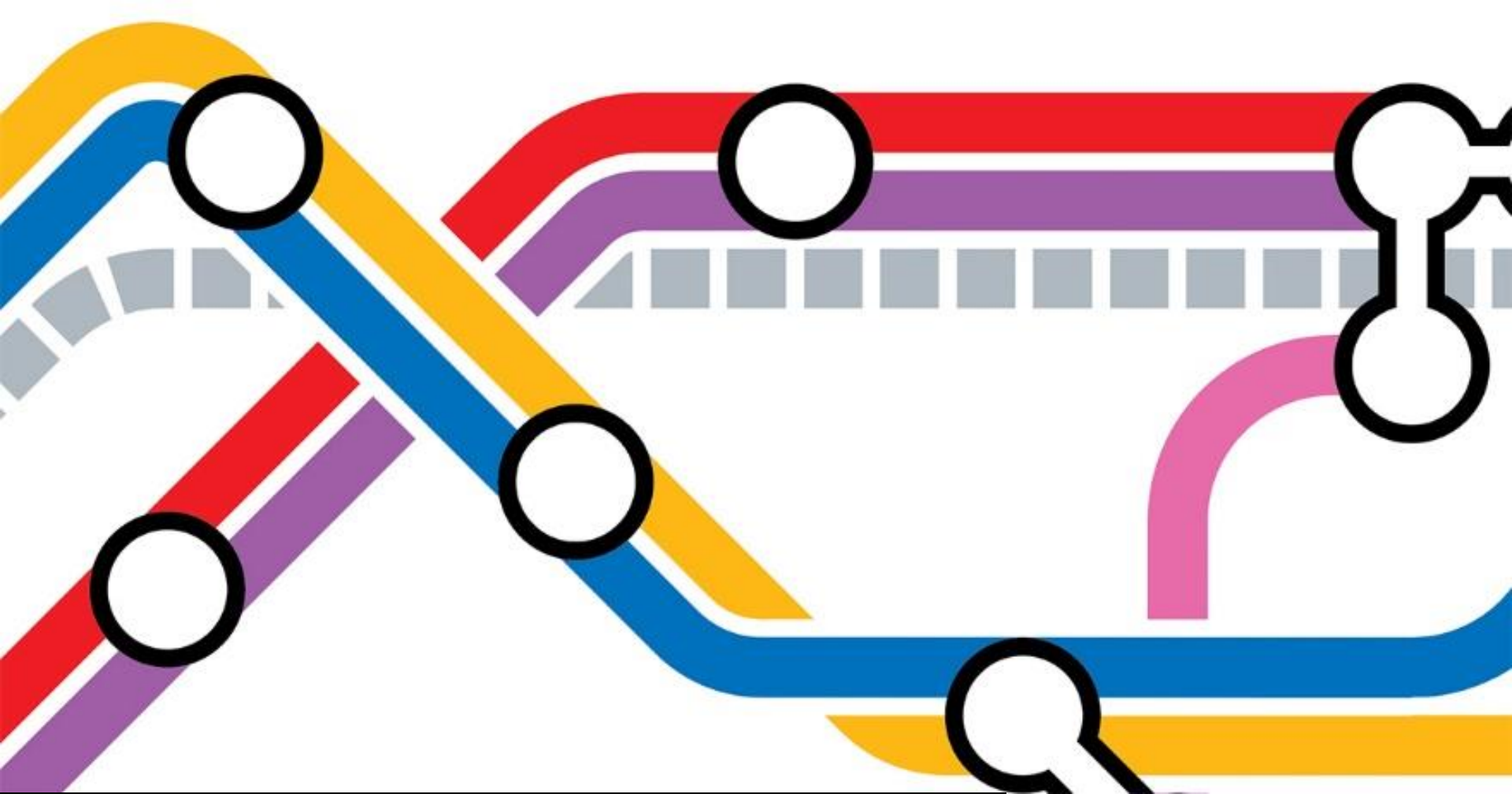
OVERALL EASE-OF-USE

How easy or difficult do you think it would be to find your way around on Metro using each of the following naming options?



Order of naming options was randomized

- Very easy
- Somewhat easy
- Neither easy nor difficult
- Somewhat difficult
- Very difficult



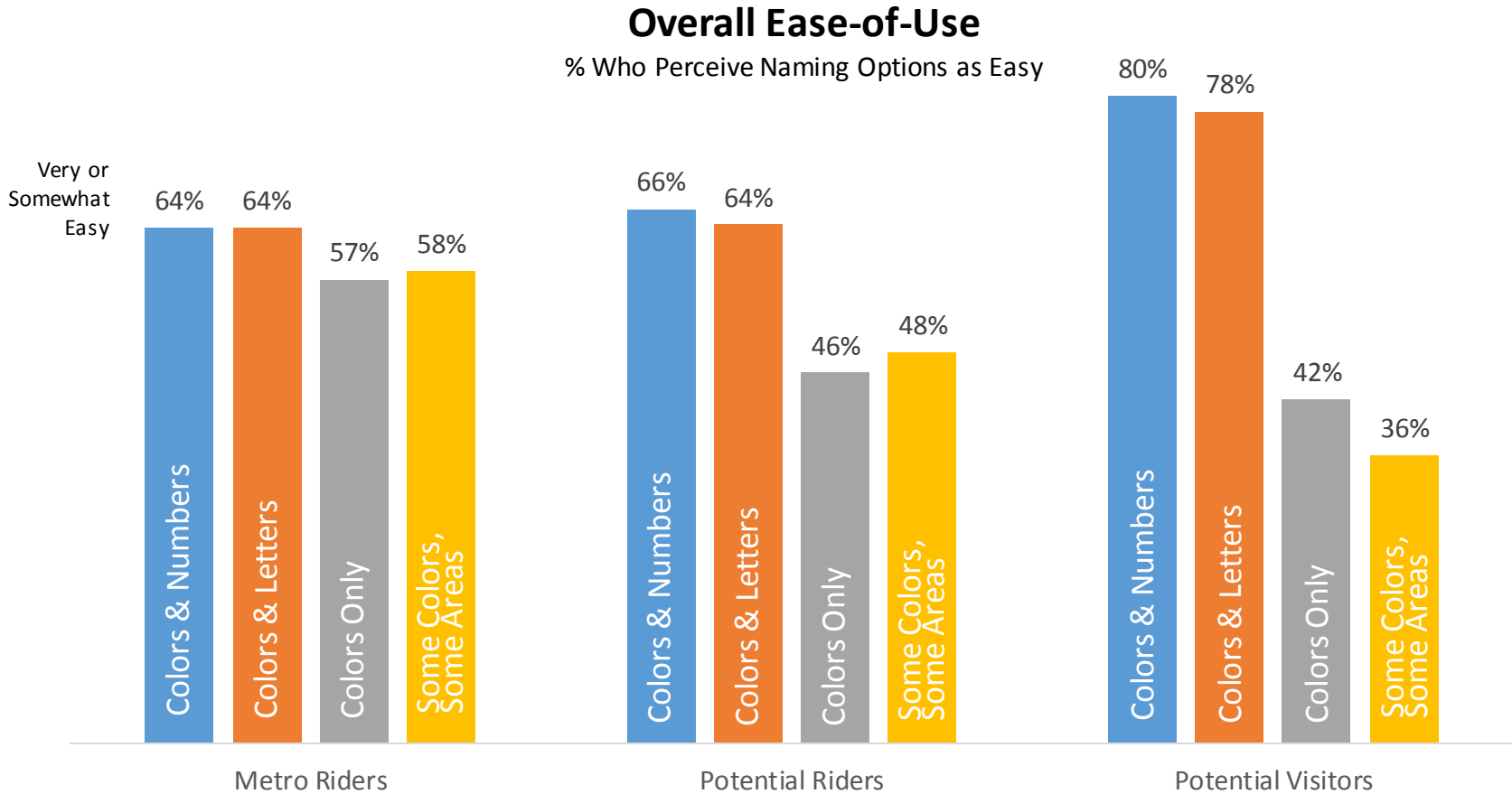
Survey Results

Important Analysis Considerations

- A 1-2% difference is, for all intents and purposes, a tie.
 - While there is a robust sample size, when projecting the results out to the population, there could be some variance of about 1-2% points
- Key subgroups have unique experiences that influence their responses.
 - **Riders** are more comfortable than other groups with existing approaches of Colors Only and Some Colors, Some Areas
 - **Riders** rate Colors Only and Some Colors, Some Areas higher than Potential Riders. However, Letters and Numbers are still seen as easiest.
 - **Potential Visitors** aren't familiar with the current system and will learn the naming convention
 - **Potential Visitors** can skew towards a certain language or experience with transit line names. As such, results should be considered with caution.
- A naming convention should consider how Riders, Potential Riders, and Potential Visitors rate the options.
 - **Potential Riders** are the largest audience

Regarding Overall Ease-of-Use, Colors & Numbers and Colors & Letters are perceived as easiest across the three groups

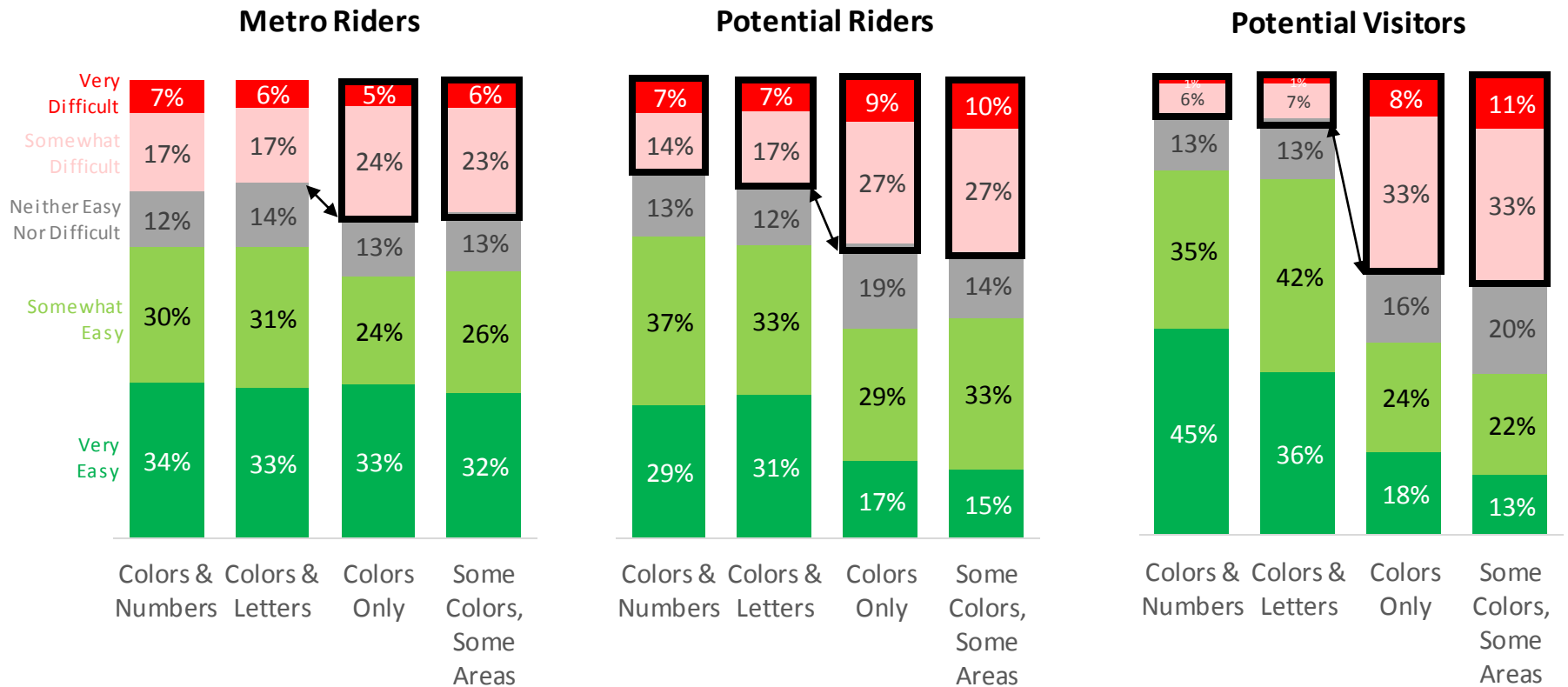
- For those less familiar with the current system, Numbers and Letters are even more of the clear choice



Q: How easy or difficult do you think it would be to find your way around on Metro using each of the following naming options?

Colors Only and Some Colors, Some Areas have greater perceived difficulty across all groups

Overall Ease-of-Use



Q: How easy or difficult do you think it would be to find your way around on Metro using each of the following naming options?

Overall, Colors & Numbers and Colors & Letters are consistently rated as easier across all demographic and geographic groups

Regions	Ethnicity	Transit Usage	Income Ranges	Age Ranges	Gender
Central LA	African American	Metro Riders	Less than \$35k	18-34	Females
Gateway Cities	Asian	Potential Riders	\$35-\$49.9k	35-54	Males
San Fernando Valley	Latino/Hispanic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English-Dominant • Bilingual • Spanish-Dominant 	Potential Visitors	\$50-\$74.9k	55+	
San Gabriel Valley	Caucasian		\$75k or more		
Santa Clarita & Antelope Valleys					
South Bay					
Westside Cities					



In their own words...

Why is Colors Only rated as more difficult?

Because I'm colorblind and using colors is very difficult for me.

Monthly Rail Rider
Mar Vista

The similarity between some pairs of colors is absolutely maddening, especially for lines that cross each other.

Potential Rider
Brentwood

Even the best of us would have difficulty distinguishing olive from green and lime from yellow at a glance

Monthly Rail Rider,
Redondo Beach

Colors only are very confusing for me. I only know basic colors.

Daily Bus & Rail Rider
Downtown

In their own words...

Why is Some Colors, Some Areas rated as more difficult?

When I hear the San Fernando line...I think of the city and my first thought, is "Oh no I don't want to go that way!"

20 year Gold Line
#30 Bus Rider

Area and other names take longer to say, harder to keep track of, and are less friendly to tourists.

Potential Rider
Long Beach

With a mixture it's more difficult to figure out how to refer to a line and a direction.

Frequent Bus &
Rail Rider
West Hollywood

Area names are arbitrary, and not intuitive even though I have lived in LA County for 5 years.

Frequent Rider
Hollywood

It should be consistent. To mix colors and destinations is confusing.

Occasional Rail
Rider
SF Valley

In their own words...

Why Colors & Letters or Colors & Numbers?

Numbers and letters are just so much faster to relay directions.

Frequent Rider
Montecito
Heights

It's easier to determine the correct line when the color is reinforced by some other signifier, like a letter.

Weekly Rail Rider
Azusa

I live in China and know how difficult it is to get around when you cannot read/understand signs. A combination of letters or numbers along with colors makes it really simple.

Potential Visitor
China

I've used systems in North American cities and in Europe. I've found for myself that the simpler naming system is the easier it is to use.

Frequent Bus
Rider
Mar Vista

Numbers and letters are much easier to memorize, see, hear, etc.

Frequent Rail
Rider
DTLA

In their own words...

Why Letters over Numbers?

If you say 'the 5' and 'the 10', people will probably think you are talking about the freeways.

Frequent
Rail/Bus Rider
Westwood

Letters are easy and common in different cities. Numbers are also easy but can be confused with the bus numbers.

Potential Rider
Windsor Hills

I've often defaulted numbers to platform numbers, so using colors and numbers for line names could be confusing.

Occasional Rider
Norwalk

I think the letters and colors do a good job of separating the Metro rail and BRT lines from the bus network.

Occasional Rider
Van Nuys

When lines have letters and not numbers, it is easier and avoids confusion when explaining how many stops to take on each line.

Frequent Rider
Hollywood

Some Current Riders are not excited about change, but many say they'll adapt, particularly with good education

Regardless, LA will get used to whatever system is used just make sure you have a very long and thoughtful public service campaign to educate users.

Rider
South Pasadena

While those of us who rely on the Metro will learn whatever you toss our way, the rest that live for their cars and traffic need to be pampered.

Frequent Bus Rider
Lawndale

I think with learning any new system there will always be difficulty but over time most can adapt.

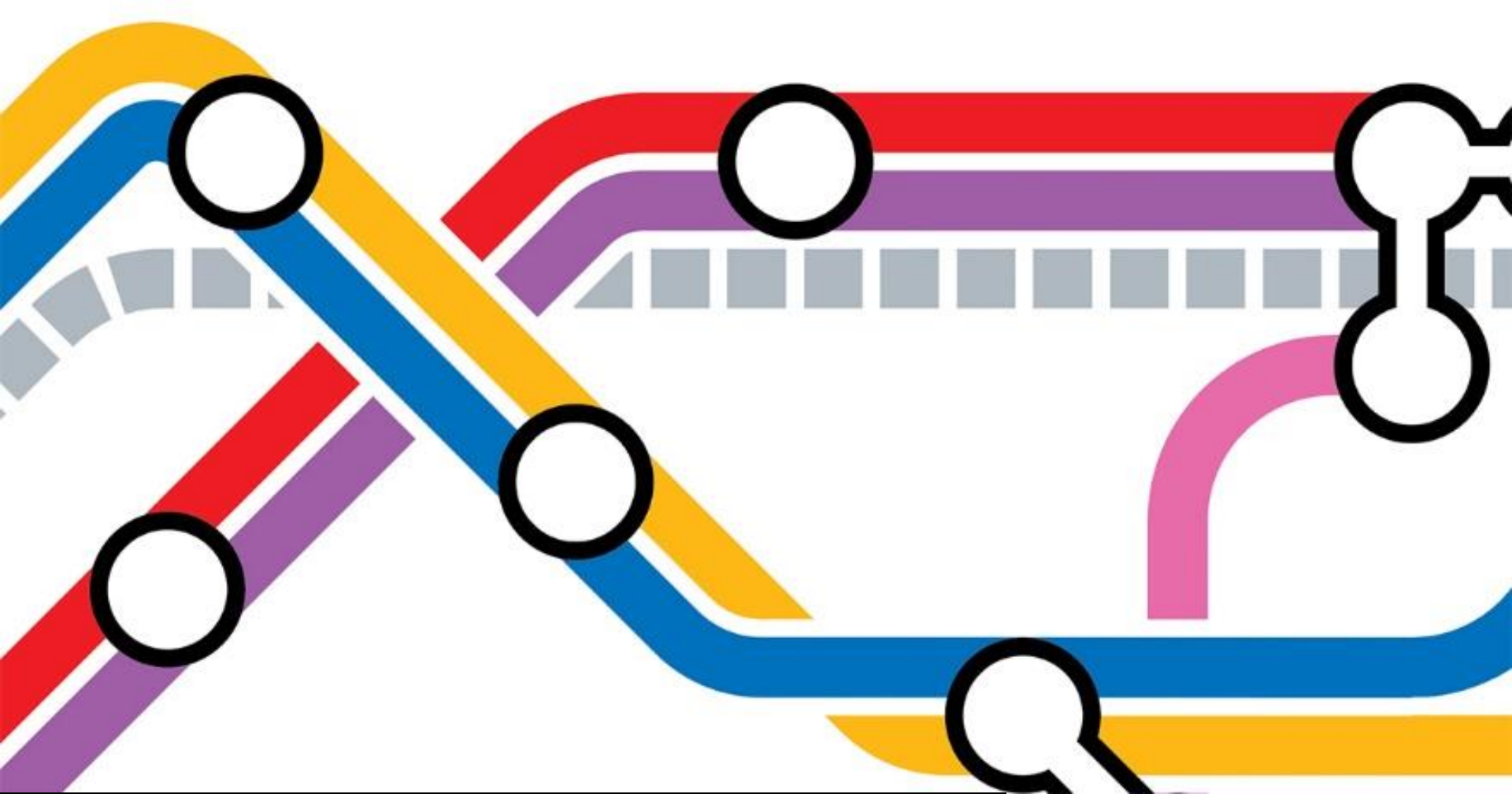
Potential Rider
Glendale

Well, honestly as humans we adjust to most situations so whatever we are presented with we will learn.

Bi-Weekly Rail Rider
Carson

Staff Recommendation

- Color and Letter-based naming convention for rail and bus rapid transit lines
 - Consistency
 - Second identifier
 - No confusion with numbering of bus system and rail station platforms
 - Ample letters to accommodate future lines
 - Letter assignment will follow chronology of line openings
 - Makes map clearer at end points and transfer points
- Phased implementation plan
 - Blue Line transitions first during New Blue Improvements Project
 - Rest of the rail/BRT system transitions with the opening of the Crenshaw/LAX Line
 - When Regional Connector Project is complete, only the Gold Line letter will change
 - Expo/Gold Line one-seat ride can be the E Line and gold color on the map
 - Blue/Gold Line one-seat ride can be the A Line and blue color on the map
 - Total cost: \$8.9 million



Appendix

2018 Focus Group Methodology

- Various locations and recruitment criteria to reflect some of the diversity of current and potential Metro riders

Date	Location	Group Type
August 22	Sherman Oaks	English-Speaking Potential Riders
August 25	Downtown LA	English-Speaking Metro Riders
August 25	Downtown LA	Spanish-Speaking Metro Riders
August 28	Mid-City	English-Speaking Visually-Impaired Residents
August 28	Koreatown	Korean-Speaking Residents

Focus Group Votes

First Choice for Naming Convention after All Information

	Colors	Letters	Numbers	Combination
English-Speaking Non-Riders	2	3	5	0
English-Speaking Metro Riders	2	4	3	1
Spanish-Speaking Metro Riders	5	1	4	0
English-Speaking Visually-Impaired Riders	1	3	0	3
Korean-Speaking Residents	0	0	10	0
Total	10	11	22	4

Field Research Format & Methodology



Date	Location	Event/Area
October 9	Blue Line	Green Rides Expo Metro Pop-Up
October 12	Expo LA	LAFC Game
October 15	Blue Line	Care Harbor LA
October 16	Downtown LA	Taco Tuesday at The BLOC
October 16	North Hollywood	North Hollywood Station
October 19	Boyle Heights	Mariachi Plaza
October 20	Expo Westside	Grant Elementary School Fall Festival
October 25	Downtown LA	Union Station
October 26	Downtown LA	Older Adults Transportation Expo
October 26	Pasadena	UCLA Game Day at Del Mar Station

Field Research Format & Methodology



Latino and other ethnicities give a slight edge to Numbers.

Overall Ease-of-Use
% Who Perceive Naming Options as Easy

