Transit Line Naming Convention Overview and Focus Group Results

Executive Management Committee September 20, 2018



Naming for the Future

- Metro is growing and the system is changing
- Time to establish the naming convention of the future
 - Clarity and Consistency
 - Need a clear, consistent, uniform navigation system
 - Reflects Strategic Plan goals (customer-focus and satisfaction)
 - Metro's Magic Moment
 - New Blue is an opportunity to launch a new naming convention
 - Regional Connector will unite Gold and Blue Lines, and Gold and Expo Lines
 - Crenshaw opening will mean changes for Green Line
 - World-Class System
 - Always ready to welcome the world especially in 2028

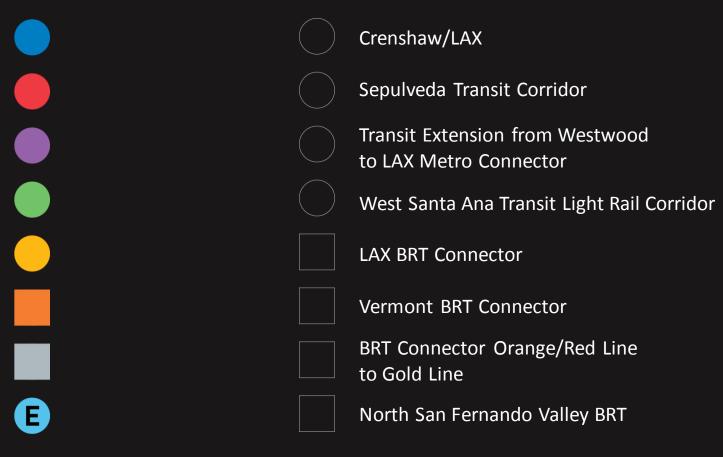


Current Transit Line Name Factors

- Metro's naming convention is 28 years old and riders have learned how to navigate the system
- Current naming is inconsistent colors and Expo
- Future corridor names aren't clear (West Santa Ana)
- Current naming is a challenge for those who are color-blind
- Shades of colors can sometimes be difficult to decipher on a map or sign



Our System is Growing





*Anticipated by 2028

Industry Examples

New York City Subway 23 lines



Portland TriMet MAX 5 lines



Paris Metro
15 lines



Chicago CTA L 8 lines

Red Line	Blue Line	Green Line		
Orange Line	Brown Line	Yellow Line		
Purple Line	Pink Line			

Toronto TTC 7 lines



Denver RTD 10 lines



Washington Metro Metrorail 6 lines





Focus Groups Methodology

- 5 focus groups with current and future riders
- Focus groups were two hours each
- 47 total participants



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 Non-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 Perspectives

- Participants were recruited to represent diverse backgrounds and perspectives, but are not statistically precise
- Provided an opportunity to collect qualitative feedback, i.e., the rationale for their preferences
- Allowed for testing visual collateral in real time and see people's expressions, verbal and non-verbal cues, and how they talk about this question with others



Structure of Focus Groups

Discussions were designed to assess preferences among four different transit line naming convention options:

- Combination of colors and geography (approximating the current system)
- Colors only
- Colors with numbers assigned in chronological order
- Colors with letters assigned in chronological order

Familiarity with Current System

Initial Comparison of 2028 Maps Preferences for Station/ Platform Signage

Ease of Trip
Planning

Reactions to "Transition" Flyer Final Re-Review of 2028 Maps



Current System Map



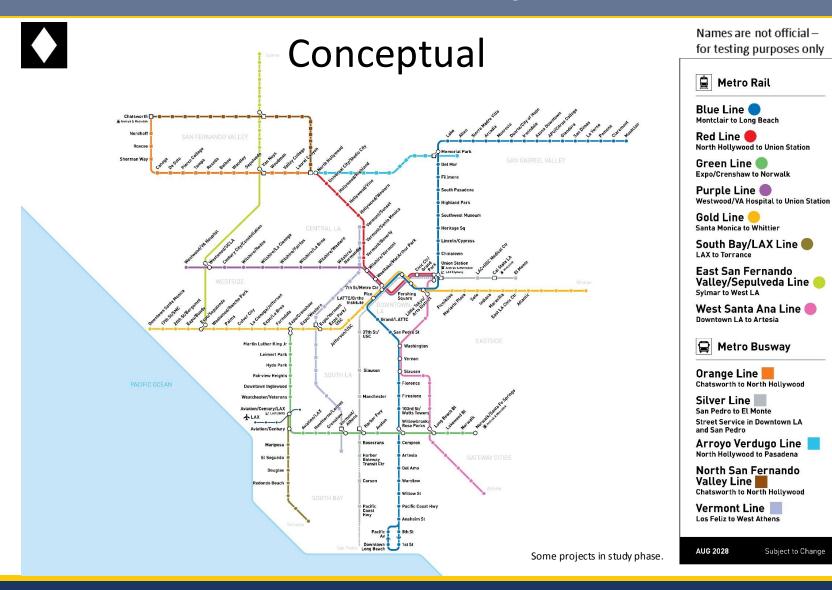


Current System Map

- Current riders are mostly comfortable with the existing map and mostly understand it.
- For some riders, particularly Spanish-speakers and visuallyimpaired, it took a significant amount of work to learn the system.
- None of the non-riders had even seen the map in the past and they were surprised by the number of lines.
- Some found it hard to distinguish between colors of Red and Orange lines and some thought gold looked yellow
- Several people (including some who ride often) are confused by the "E" on the light blue dot for the Expo line and think it stands for "East," "Express" or "Extension."
- Some mentioned concerns about the inconsistency of having one line not named for a color.

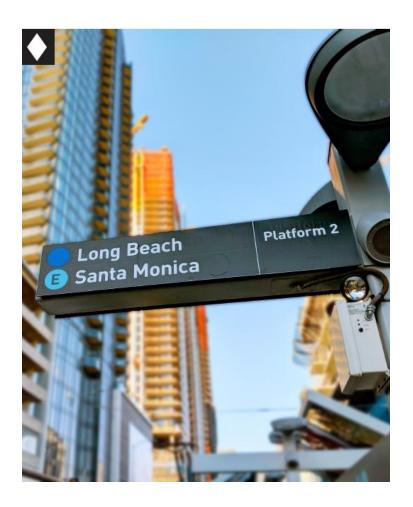


Combination Map – 2028



Combination Signage







Combination

PRO

Continuation of current system

For some lines, gives a sense of where the line goes

CON

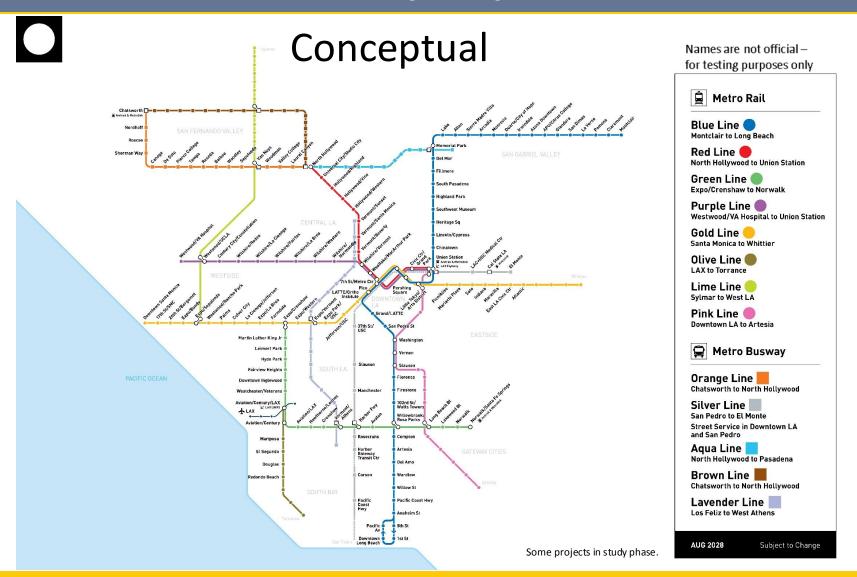
Lack of internal consistency

Some names are too long to say

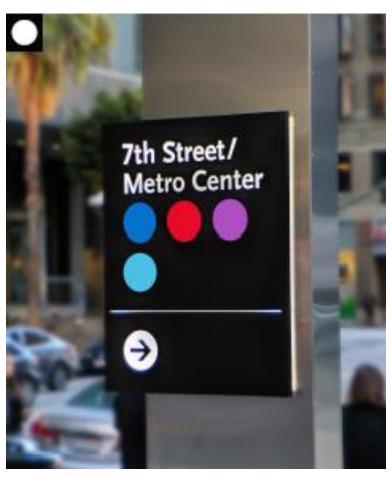
Hard for quick references when catching a train/bus

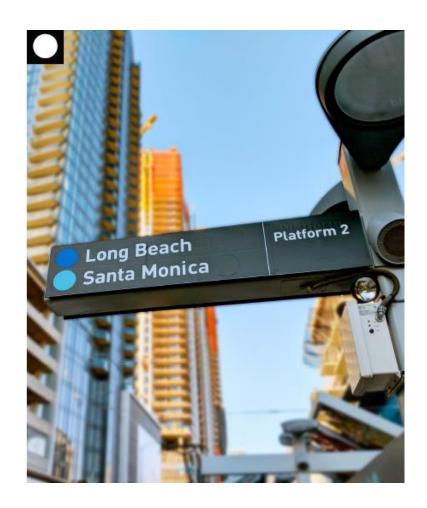


Colors Only Map – 2028



Colors Only Signage







Colors Only

PRO

Consistent across system

Similar to current system

Simple

Preferred by Spanish-dominant speakers

CON

Can be hard to distinguish between similar colors; color blindness

Only one point of reference

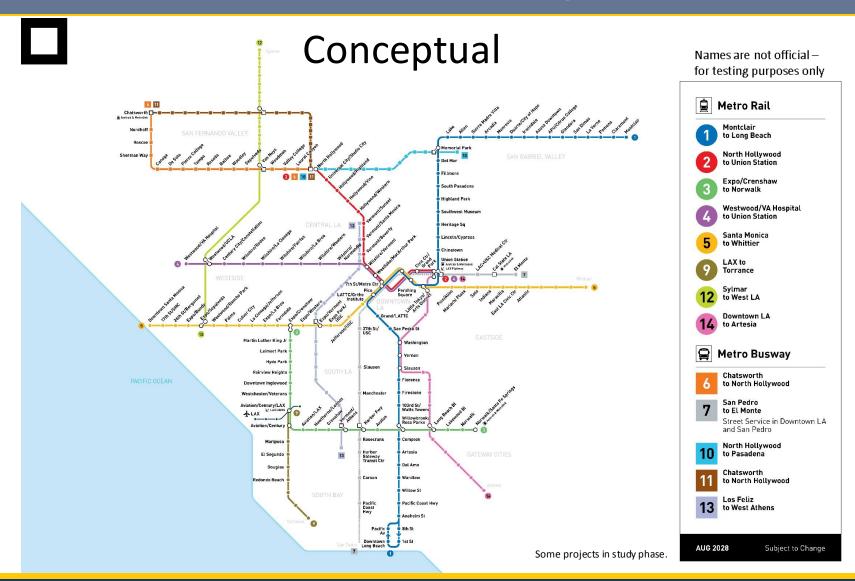
Hard for quick references when catching a train/bus

Multiple terms for the same color (i.e., aqua, sky blue, light blue, turqoise, etc.)

Colors are "just words" to those born blind

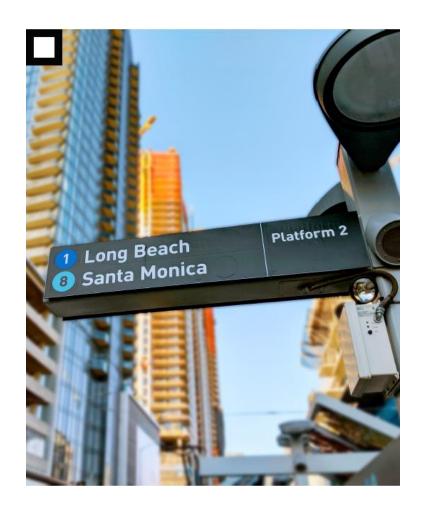


Numbers w/Colors Map – 2028



Numbers w/Colors Signage







Numbers w/Colors

PRO

Consistent across system

Simple

Intuitive to many

Second point of reference

Makes map clearer at end points of lines and the transfer points

CON

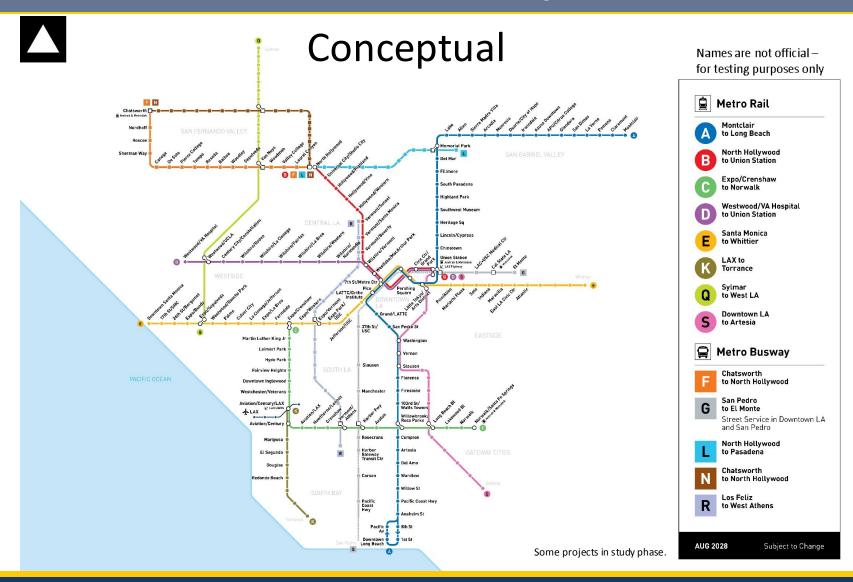
Different from current system

Conflicts with bus numbering

Conflicts with platform numbers

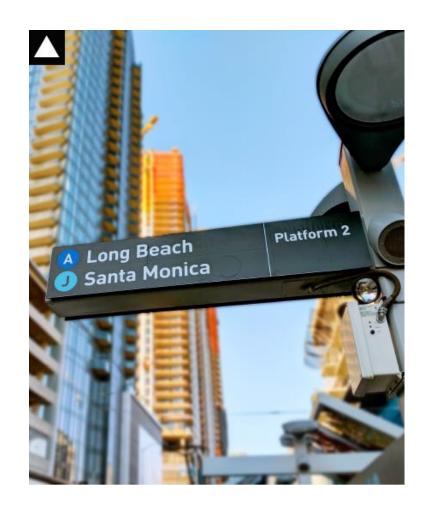


Letters w/Colors Map – 2028



Letters w/Colors Signages







Letters w/Colors

PRO

Consistent across system

Second point of reference

Makes map clearer at end points of lines and the transfer points

Intuitive to many

CON

Some people try to associate letters with places or color names

Letters often have meaning (H=hospital, E=East, etc.)

Skipped letters were confusing to some

Different from current system

Difficult for people whose languages don't include the Roman alphabet/lack English literacy



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	



Other Findings

- Consistency across the system is one of the most important factors
- Riders and non-riders think the way the lines are named is important
 - For non-riders, simplicity and expanded system makes them more likely to try Metro
- Most could be satisfied with either numbers or letters
- Riders and non-riders alike want more help figuring out how to go where they want to go
 - Which lines to take
 - How to get to the right platform inside each station
- Readability matters to many
 - Contrast of colors with each other
 - Contrast of text to colors



Transit Line Naming Options 2028

	Option 1 Colors		Option 2 Colors and Corridor Names		Option 3 Numbers		Option 4 Letters
1990	Blue Line	1990	Blue Line	1990	1	1990	A
1993	Red Line	1993	Red Line	1993	2	1993	В
1995	Green Line	1995	Green Line	1995	3	1995	C
1996	Purple Line	1996	Purple Line	1996	4	1996	D
2003	Gold Line	2003	Gold Line	2003	5	2003	E
2005	Orange Line	2005	Orange Line	2005	6	2005	F
2009	Silver Line	2009	Silver Line	2009	7	2009	G
2019	Olive Line	2019	South Bay/LAX Line	2019	9	2019	K
2022	Aqua Line	2022	Arroyo Verdugo Line	2022	10	2022	L
2023	Brown Line	2023	North San Fernando Valley Line	2023	11	2023	N
2027	Lime Line	2027	East San Fernando Valley/Sepulveda Line	2027	12	2027	Q
2028	Lavender Line	2028	Vermont Line	2028	13	2028	R
2028	Pink Line	2028	West Santa Ana Line	2028	10	2028	S



Keeping it in Perspective

- A consistent, clear, uniform system enhances customer experience and makes riding Metro less intimidating
- Legacy names and operational names can live in harmony
- No naming convention is perfect; there are benefits and challenges with all of them
- A decision should take into account all of the following:
 - Research what do "the people" think?
 - Knowledge and expertise
 - Industry lessons learned
 - What is best for Metro and LA County



Next Steps

- Conduct additional research with diverse groups to test alternatives, signage and trip planner
 - Online Survey
 - Field Research Pop-Ups at Metro Stations if necessary
 - Additional focus groups if necessary
- Present overview and Recommended Action at September Board meeting
 - Action to return to the Board at Nov./Dec. meeting with staff recommendation, cost estimation and schedule
- Provide staff recommendation to Board at Nov./Dec. meeting including cost estimate and schedule



