



**Metro**

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Metropolitan Transportation Authority

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**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT AND AUDIT COMMITTEE  
SEPTEMBER 21, 2006**

**SUBJECT: LINE IDENTIFICATION STANDARDS**

**ACTION: ADOPT IDENTIFICATION STANDARDS FOR METRO TRANSIT LINES**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Adopt standards that establish a customer-oriented and user-friendly identification system for Metro bus and rail lines that ensure consistency in all customer information including signage, printed materials and electronic mediums as described in Attachment A.

**ISSUE**

Currently customers may see the same transit line identified in several different ways on bus stop signs, vehicle headsigns, timetables and in the Trip Planner available on metro.net. Multiple divisions and departments are responsible for various elements of these forms of communication. Therefore, agencywide standards providing interdepartmental guidelines and procedures on line information and how it is presented will ensure that information is consistent across mediums and will improve the customer experience and customer usability of the system.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The lack of consistent identification information creates inconsistency at the most basic level of communication with its customers. For instance, when a transit line is referenced differently in the timetable, on the bus stop and on the bus headsign, it makes it difficult for the customer to know with certainty where they can access the service and where the service will take them. Customers should be confident that the information supplied by Metro is clear and helpful.

**OPTIONS**

The Board could choose to maintain the current situation and not adopt line identification standards. The line names would continue as they are now, increasing confusion among customers and further inconsistencies within the agency.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There is no financial impact for the majority of the activity related to the new standards. Updating line names on timetables and other printed materials will be done during the normal course of reprinting information. For example, when service changes are made, new timetables and other related materials will be printed using the new naming convention. Signage and information products controlled by internal electronic databases will require no additional material costs to update line names using the new standards. Examples of these items include HASTUS, vehicle headsigns, automatic bus voice announcements, metro.net and the Trip Planner.

Changing the line identifiers at bus stops would have the greatest financial impact to the agency. In particular, effective implementation would require that all bus stop signs that serve lines that will be modified be entirely replaced using a revised signage design that accommodates the new line reference standards. Staff has estimated that changing the blades at all bus stops will cost about \$2.2 million. Staff will pursue funding to implement a replacement of the bus stop signage, but currently no funding exists for this activity. Since this is a multi-year project, the managers of the various impacted cost centers will be responsible for budgeting the costs in future years.

## **BACKGROUND**

Although some guidelines were used by Metro's predecessor agencies to refer to lines, all that remains is the bus and rail line numbering system. Bus line numbers dictate the type of service provided (for example, the 300s represent Metro Local buses with Limited service and the 700s identify Metro Rapid bus service). In support of the numbering convention, the new bus color scheme established bold colors for Metro Local, Metro Rapid and Metro Express to reinforce the type of service represented by the line number.

In addition to identifying the type of service, the numbering system also indicates where the line travels. For example, Lines 1 – 99 are lines that travel into Downtown Los Angeles, referencing general corridors consecutively in a counter-clockwise rotation. The 100s run from East to West and the 200s run from North to South, both series traveling outside of Downtown Los Angeles. However, even if most customers know this system, and for example would know that Line 202 travels North to South, without the name, the destination points are unknown.

The line numbering system was re-affirmed in the early 1980s, with the additional referencing of the corridor it traveled. For example, Line 14 was named Beverly Blvd because it was a local service traveling mainly along that street. However, based on customer input obtained through research and general industry practice, destination-based line identifiers have since become more common and the gradual shift to destinations is where inconsistencies occur. For example, a bus stop sign may use the corridor reference but the timetable may use the destination identifier. This causes confusion for customers and a complete shift to one system will eliminate this confusion. Customers have positively rated the changes on timetables that display destinations in recent customer satisfaction on-board surveys.

## Proposed Line Identification Framework

The new bus line naming standards would further expand a destination-based naming scheme and would require departments to present line information in a consistent manner. The guidelines would continue to uphold the numbering scheme and continue to identify service using the known numbering criteria. The standards will include the following:

- The name of the line will contain both end points, or destinations. These would be known cities, communities or a major destination point.
- The destination points will be listed in an West to East or North to South order, consistent with how lines are represented and read on a map.
- The name of the line will also list at least one major corridor on which it travels.
- Timetables, the Trip Planner, all internal documents, HASTUS and other electronic databases and printed materials will list the line by its full name.
- Bus stop signs will list the destination point the bus is traveling towards and if space permits, include the corridor name(s) the route travels along. Special route conditions, including but not limited to rush-hour service and weekday-only service will also be noted if space permits.
- Headsigns and automatic bus voice announcements will note the destination point the bus is traveling towards and at least one major corridor. For short-line trips, the destination shown will be the destination of that trip and not of the entire line.
- Headsigns will list the destination in the first frame and corridor information in following frames.
- Headsigns will read “Not in Service” or “No Service” in one frame.
- Name abbreviations, street extensions and other topics will be dictated by the Metro Signage Guidelines.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Upon Board adoption of the standards, all future bus line referencing efforts will follow the approved convention. A process will be established between the Sectors, the Scheduling Department and Communications to propose the new names and follow the naming standards.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Transit Line Identification Standards
- B. Samples of Current Line References at Bus Stop Locations

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## TRANSIT SERVICE LINE IDENTIFICATION STANDARDS

### PURPOSE

The purpose of establishing transit service line identification standards is to create a customer-oriented and user-friendly communication system for referencing service. By improving how service is identified and customer understanding of where service operates, usability of Metro transit service will be enhanced and, therefore, possibly increase ridership.

### GENERAL STANDARDS

Transit service lines will be identified using a combination of destinations (both end points) and the corridor(s) the line travels along. Acceptable destination names include a city, community or major destination point. The destination points will be listed in an West to East or North to South order, consistent with how the line would be read on a map. The name of the line will also list at least one major corridor on which it travels. Name abbreviations, street extensions and other topics will be dictated by the Metro Signage Guidelines.

### PRINTED MATERIALS AND ELECTRONIC CUSTOMER INFORMATION

The line will be presented using the full name, listing both the destinations and major corridor(s). The printed materials include but are not limited to timetables, service change announcements, brochures, system maps and line reports. Electronic customer information includes the Metro Transit Trip Planner, line information presented on metro.net and underlying electronic databases.

### BUS STOP SIGNAGE

The line will be presented using the destination point that the vehicle is traveling to in each direction. If room is available, the main corridor(s) will also be listed as well as special route conditions including but not limited to rush-hour service and weekday-only service.

### VEHICLE HEADSIGNS

The line will be identified using the destination point in which the vehicle is traveling towards. Headsigns will list the destination in the first frame and corridor information in following frames. For short-line trips, the destination shown will be the destination of that trip and not of the entire line. When the line is not in service, the sign will read either "Not in Service" or, depending on space availability, "No Service" in one frame.

### AUTOMATIC VOICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The line will be identified in automatic voice announcements using the destination point that the vehicle is traveling to in each direction and at least one major corridor. For short-line trips, the destination noted will be the destination of that trip and not of the entire line.

SAMPLES OF CURRENT LINE REFERENCES AT BUS STOP LOCATIONS

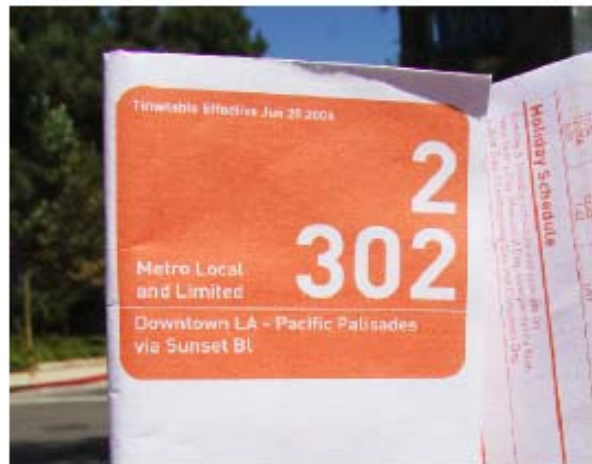
**Line 2**

Bus Stop Blade  
**Downtown LA Hill/Venice**

Bus (Front)  
**Downtown LA Hill-Venice**

Bus (Side)  
**Downtown LA Hill-Venice**

Timetable  
**Downtown LA-Pacific Palisades  
via Sunset Bl**



## Line 4

Bus Stop Blade

**West LA (24 Hour)  
Santa Monica (8PM-6AM)**

Bus (Front)

**Sepulveda Bl**

Bus (Side)

**Sepulveda Bl**

Timetable

**Downtown LA-Santa Monica  
via Santa Monica Bl**



## Line 20

Bus Stop Blade

**Downtown LA Maple/7th  
(24 Hour Service)**

Bus (Front)

**Downtown LA 7th-Main  
Downtown LA 7th-Westwood**

Bus (Side)

**Downtown LA 7th-Main**

Timetable

**Downtown LA-Santa Monica  
via Wilshire Bl**





## Line 28

Bus Stop Blade

**Century City via Olympic Bl**

Bus (Front)

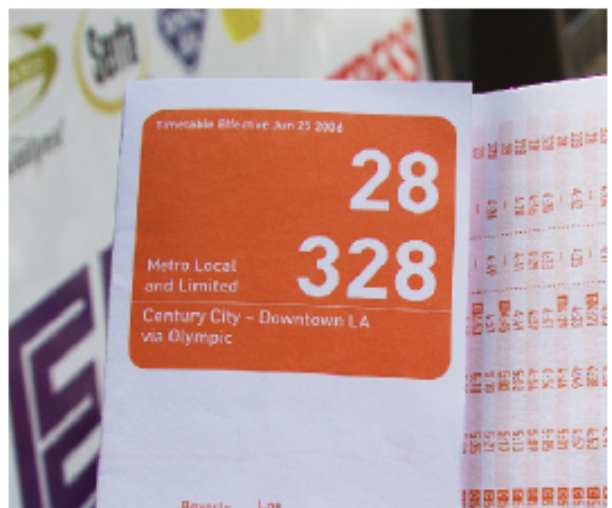
**Century City**

Bus (Side)

**Century City**

Timetable

**Century City-Downtown LA  
via Olympic**



## Line 115

Bus Stop Blade

**Norwalk Green Line Station**

Bus (Front)

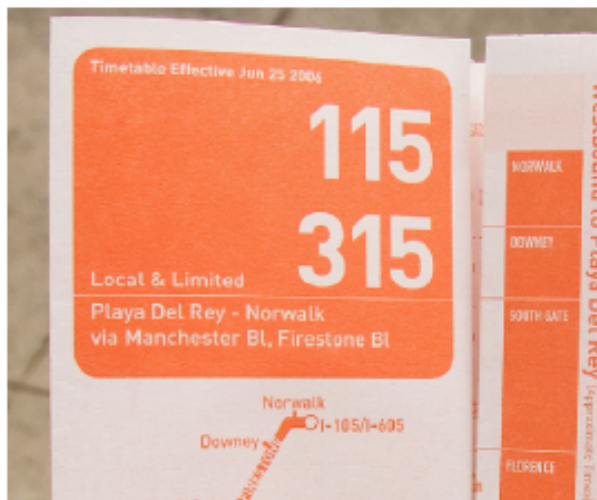
**Firestone Atlantic**

Bus (Side)

**Firestone-Atlantic**

Timetable

**Playa Del Rey-Norwalk via  
Manchester Bl, Firestone Bl**



## Line 353

Bus Stop Blade

**North Hollywood Red Line Station (Mon-Fri Rush Hr Limited)**

Bus (Front)

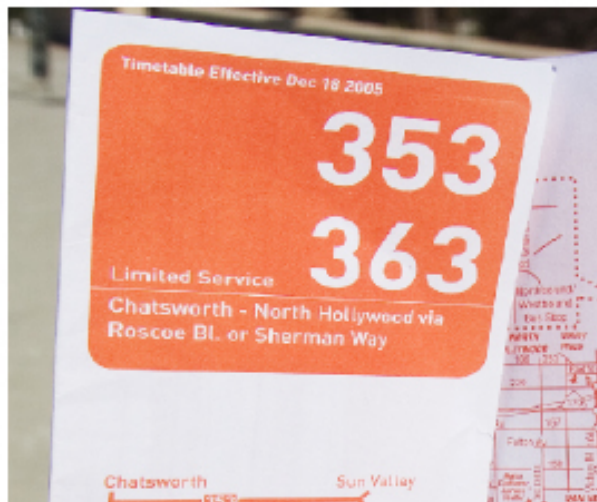
**North Hollywood Station**

Bus (Side)

**North Hollywood Station**

Timetable

**Chatsworth-North Hollywood via Roscoe Bl. or Sherman Way**



## Line 645

Bus Stop Blade

**Warner Center  
Transit Hub (Mon-Fri)**

Bus (Front)

**Warner Ctr Transit Hub**

Bus (Side)

**Warner Ctr Transit Hub**

Timetable

**Woodland Hills-West Hills via  
Valley Circle Bl. & Mulholland Dr.**



## Line 710

Bus Stop Blade

**Crenshaw  
(Hollywood > South Bay)**

Bus (Front)

**South Bay Galleria**

Bus (Side)

**South Bay Galleria**

Timetable

**South Bay Galleria-Hollywood via  
Crenshaw Bl & Vine St**

