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Metropolitan
Transportation
Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA
90012-2952

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT AND AUDIT COMMITTEE
AUGUST 21, 2003

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SUBJECT: PROPERTY NAMING POLICY

ACTION: ADOPT CONSOLIDATED POLICY

RECOMMENDATION

Approve a consolidated and enhanced policy for the naming of all MTA properties that will supercede several existing policies. That will ensure that MTA properties are named in a timely, cost-effective manner for the maximum benefit and convenience of our customers.

ISSUE

MTA currently has several adopted naming policies for rail stations, transit centers and bus stops. These policies need to be consolidated and expanded to reflect evolving transit service property naming needs and to ensure that names are 1) as helpful as possible to our transit customers, 2) meet ADA requirements, 3) are determined in a timely, cost effective manner and 4) address the broad range of necessary operational applications.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

MTA's currently adopted naming policies create confusion regarding the appropriate property naming criteria and process to be followed when new projects are readied for operation. Recently, this lack of a clear naming policy resulted in customer confusion and additional last-minute project costs as station names were revised to reflect stakeholder input.

Each of the MTA's predecessor agencies had adopted naming policies – each with their own strengths. In June 1989, the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD) Board adopted names for the first five stations of the Metro Red Line based on a policy that clearly identified guiding principles for station naming efforts to facilitate both frequent and infrequent customer wayfinding. During the planning phase of the project, Metro Red Line station names were designated generally by adjacent street names. Later, during the final design stage and with stakeholder input, a majority of the first five stations were named for well-known station area destinations – Union Station, Civic Center, Pershing Square and Westlake/MacArthur Park. Due to the lack of a major landmark, the fifth station was named for a combination of adjacent street names and new transit facility – 7th Street/Metro Center.

The Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC) developed a naming policy that was utilized for the naming of Metro Blue and Green Line stations. This simple, focused policy provided naming criteria with minor guiding principles. The adopted policy called for primarily geographically based station naming, with the ability for names to be comprised of two elements joined by a slash. The first name was to identify the adjacent cross street and, where relevant, a second name identified by community points of interest. Following this policy, a station could have both a primary name and secondary name, for example Pico Boulevard/Los Angeles Convention Center. The primary station name served as the operational name and was used on station signage and system maps. This policy also identified the need to solicit input on station names from communities, cities and public groups prior to bringing the station names to the Board for adoption.

After the MTA was formed, the new Board adopted the LACTC naming policy in June 1993 along with the Metro Green Line station names. This is the primary Board adopted enabling policy to date for station naming purposes.

In March 1997, the Board approved a separate policy to address the naming of MTA properties for individuals who had made significant contributions to transportation in Los Angeles County. This policy referenced the previously adopted naming policy and expanded it beyond addressing rail stations only to include transit centers and bus stops.

The new property naming policy synthesizes some of the strengths of the previous policy efforts including:

- Provides guiding principles to focus property naming efforts to provide for the maximum benefit and convenience of our customers; and
- Expands property naming criteria beyond primarily geographically-based locations to include well-known destinations, community/neighborhood name and city name to reflect evolving way-finding needs;

In addition, the new policy addresses other important operational issues including:

- Identifies a property naming process to ensure timely, customer-friendly and cost-effective property naming efforts;
- Minimizes length of property names to ensure general public and ADA readability;
- Ensures ability to fit name within the physical parameters of the MTA's signage system; and
- Enables clear and efficient voice announcements by vehicle operators.

ALTERNATIVE CONSIDERED

The Board could choose to maintain the status quo and not consolidate the existing property naming policies. The property naming process would continue as is with name changes possibly being identified and adopted near to each project's opening date resulting in increased public confusion and additional project costs.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

Adoption of this policy will lead to focused, cost-effective property naming decisions resulting in future cost savings for MTA, while ensuring provision of clear and timely travel information for our customers.

DISCUSSION

The adopted MTA property naming policies need to be consolidated and revised to reflect evolving property naming needs and efforts. First, the naming criteria should be expanded beyond primarily geographic destination-based property naming to better assist in customer wayfinding. Second, the policy should formalize the process by which the public (cities, communities and other stakeholders) will be involved in the naming process. Finally, the policy should be expanded to include full range of MTA property naming needs.

Staff has reviewed property naming policies and procedures of MTA's predecessor agencies as well as other systems throughout the nation. Many other transit system operators have refined their property naming policies over time to reflect evolving operational and community needs. The policy revisions presented below are similar to those implemented by others in the transit industry.

The consolidated policy identifies that MTA properties will be named with the maximum benefit and convenience of the transit system user in mind. Property naming will provide customers with travel information in a straightforward and unified way in order to assist patrons in successfully navigating the transit system and correspondingly, the region. MTA property names will reflect the following principles:

- ***Transit system context*** – Names will provide information as to where a property is located within the context of the entire transit system with no duplication of names.
- ***Property area context*** – Names will provide specific information as to the location of the property within the context of the surrounding street system, so that users can find their way around after their arrival and to support system access via automobile drop-off and parking.

- ***Neighborhood identity*** – Where appropriate, property naming will acknowledge that system stations and stops serve as entry points to the region’s communities and neighborhoods.
- ***Simplicity*** – Names will be brief enough to allow for quick recognition and retention by the traveling public, and to fit within signage and mapping technical parameters.

In consideration of the various applications where the property name will be used and displayed, properties may have a Board-adopted official name as well as a shorter operational name. The official property name would be used for Board documents, contracts and legal documents. The operational name may be used for station/stop announcements by vehicle operators and on printed materials due to readability and size constraints. For example, Avalon/I-105 would be this station’s official name, while Avalon would serve as the operational name. In addition, the property name may be further abbreviated for other operational uses such as vehicle headsigns and fare media.

NEXT STEPS

With Board adoption of this policy, all future MTA property naming efforts will follow the identified criteria and public involvement process described in the attached policy. It is anticipated that the San Fernando Metro Rapidway and the Exposition Light Rail Line will be the first projects to follow the adopted policy.

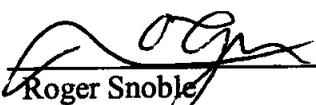
ATTACHMENT

Attachment A: MTA Property Naming Policy.

Prepared by: Nancy Michali, Public Design Manager, Creative Services



Matt Raymond
Executive Chief Communications Officer



Roger Snoble
Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENT A

PROPERTY NAMING POLICY

Purpose

Through implementation of this policy, MTA seeks to establish guidelines regarding the naming of MTA properties frequented by the public that will provide clear transit information to our customers – both frequent patrons as well as visitors and infrequent users. In addition, the policy is intended to ensure timely, cost-effective and rider-friendly property naming efforts.

Properties will be named with the maximum benefit and convenience of the transit system user in mind. Naming will provide customers with travel information in a simple, straightforward and unified way in order to assist patrons in successfully navigating the transit system and correspondingly the region. Property names will reflect the following principles:

- ***Transit system context*** – Names will provide information as to where a property is located within the context of the entire transit system; property names will be clearly distinguishable with no duplication.
- ***Property area context*** – Names will provide specific information as to the location of the property within the context of the surrounding street system, so that users can find their way around after their arrival and to support system access via automobile drop-off and parking.
- ***Neighborhood identity*** – Where appropriate, property naming will acknowledge that system stations and stops serve as entry points to the region's communities and neighborhoods.
- ***Simplicity*** – Names will be brief enough for quick recognition and retention by a passenger in a moving vehicle, and to fit within signage and mapping technical parameters.

Policy Points

1. Property naming will identify transit facilities so as to provide immediate recognition and identification for daily riders as well as periodic users and visitors. Transit facilities include rail stations, bus rapidway stations, transit centers, bus stops and other properties frequented by the public. Property names will be identified based on the following:
 - Adjacent or nearby street or freeway
 - Well-known destination or landmark
 - Community or district name
 - City name – if only one MTA property is located within a city

If space permits, property names can be a combination of street system location and well-known destination, particularly when the street system name may not be recognizable to transit riders and visitors. No business, product or personal names shall be used unless

that name is part of a street name or well-known destination; or as part of a corporate sponsorship or cooperative advertising revenue contract.

2. The following criteria will ensure simple, succinct property names that are easily understood and retained by transit riders:
 - Minimize the use of multiple names for a property. A single name identifiable by the general public is preferred, with a maximum of two distinct names separated by one slash. For example, Westlake/ MacArthur Park Station.
 - Minimize the length of property names to ensure comprehension and retention by system riders. The property name shall have a preferred maximum of 24 characters in order to ensure general public and ADA readability, and fit within MTA's signage system.
 - Minimize the inclusion of unneeded words in property names such as ones that are inherently understood, or added when verbally stating the property's name. Avoid inclusion of unnecessary words that may describe the property's location, but are not part of that location's commonly known name.
3. In consideration of the various applications where the property name will be used and displayed, properties may have a Board-adopted official name as well as a shorter operational name. The official property name would be used for Board documents, contracts and legal documents and notices. The operational name would be used for station/stop announcements by vehicle operators, and on printed materials due to readability and size constraints. In addition, the property name may be further abbreviated for other operational uses such as vehicle headsigns and fare media.
4. The property naming process will include the following steps:
 - A. Initial property names will be identified during the project planning process primarily based on geographic location.
 - B. When a project is approved by the Board to proceed into the preliminary engineering phase, a formal naming process will be initiated.
 - C. Staff will solicit input from cities, communities and other stakeholders on preferred property names based on the Board-adopted naming criteria.
 - D. The resulting property names will be reviewed by a focus group comprised of both transit system users and non-users for general public recognizability.
 - E. Staff will return to the appropriate Board committee and then to the full Board for adoption of the final set of official property names.
 - F. The adopted official property names will then be included in any final engineering bid documents and other agency materials.
 - G. Requests to rename properties after Board action and the release of project construction documents may be considered by the Board. Property name changes must be approved by a vote of two-thirds of the Board members. All

costs associated with changing a property name, including any signage revisions and market research to determine if the proposed name is recognizable by the general public, will be paid for by the requestor unless otherwise determined by the Board.

5. If the Board wishes to bestow a special honor to a deceased individual, it may choose to dedicate a site to him/her. The act of dedicating an MTA property to an individual should be rare and reserved as a means to honor those who, in the view of the Board, have demonstrated a unique and extraordinary degree of service to public transportation in Los Angeles County. Such dedications shall be viewed as secondary information with regard to signage and other identification issues. Properties/facilities frequented by the public may not be renamed for individuals.

Such dedications are made in the form of a motion presented by a Board Member to the appropriate committee of the Board for review and approval, and then forwarded to the full Board for final approval. With Board action, individuals will be honored with plaques where space is available.

Property Naming Policy

Customer-friendly property naming

Executive Management and Audit Committee

August 21, 2003

Agenda Item No. 10

Action Requested

Approve a consolidated and enhanced policy for the naming of all MTA properties that will supercede several existing policies,



Chinatown

← **Pasadena**



Property Name Usage

- Documents
- Signage
- Maps
- Brochures
- Fare machines and media
- Voice announcements
- VMS announcements
- Website – System Information, Trip Planner, etc.

MTA Policy History

SCRTD 1989

Naming Policies

- > Red Line
- > Bus Stops



MTA 1993

Rail Station
Naming Policy

- > Green Line
- > Red Line

+

MTA 1997

Honored Individual
Naming Policy

+

MTA 1997

Addition of Bus Stops
& Transit Centers

+

MTA 2003

Adoption of Gold Line
Station Names

LACTC 1989

Naming Policies

- > Blue Line



Why revise policy?

- Expand naming criteria to meet wayfinding needs
- Clarify naming process
- Reduce public confusion
- Add design, readability criteria
- Expand to reflect different operational applications
- Expand to meet evolving property needs

Other Systems Surveyed

- Dallas DART
- Denver RTD
- Houston METRO
- Portland TRIMET
- Salt Lake City UTA
- San Diego MTDB
- San Jose VTA

New Property Naming Guiding Principles

MTA property naming based on –

- Maximum benefit and convenience of customer
- Clear, unified, readable design
- Recognition that properties often serve as entry points to the region's communities and destinations

New Policy Elements

- Wider range of naming criteria
- Detailed naming process with public outreach
- Full range of properties
- Fit with signage and operational applications

Board Action

Approve a consolidated and enhanced property naming policy to ensure that MTA properties are named in a timely, cost-effective manner for the maximum benefit and convenience of our customers and communities.

Property Naming Policy

Customer-friendly property naming

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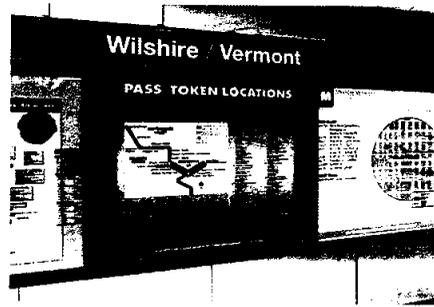
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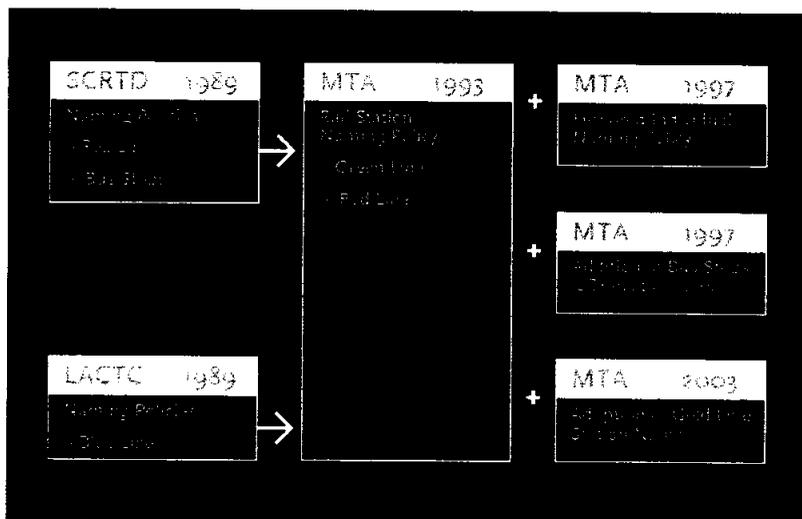


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MTA Policy History

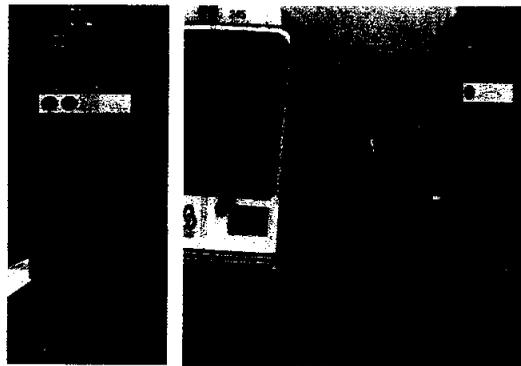


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- Recognition that properties often serve as entry points to the region's communities and destinations



New Policy Elements

- Wider range of naming criteria
- Fit with operational needs
- Clearly defined naming process with public outreach
- All properties included
- Addresses signage ADA/readability issues



Board Action

Approve a policy to ensure that MTA properties are named in a timely, cost-effective manner for the maximum benefit and convenience of our customers and communities

Wiltshire / Vermont