

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 12/14/2022

Staff Report No. 22-403a

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Michael A. Hursh, General Manager/Chief Executive Officer
SUBJECT: Bus Stop Furniture Guidelines

ACTION ITEM

AGENDA PLANNING REQUEST:

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider adopting AC Transit's Bus Stop Furniture Guidelines.

Staff Contact:
Ramakrishna Pochiraju, Executive Director of Planning & Engineering

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:

Goal - Convenient and Reliable Service
Initiative - Service Quality

All transit rides begin and end at the bus stop. Whether you are walking by a bus stop or waiting at one, bus stop furniture—such as shelters and benches—plays a critical role in the quality of the customer experience. Bus stop furniture provides clear visual markers for customers looking to catch the bus, shelter from the elements, and information on when the next bus is arriving. Shelters and benches also provide a place for people to rest, surfaces to sit or lean on when waiting for the bus. Bus stops are where the public space intersects with transit service. Well maintained and accessible bus stops depend on a mutually beneficial relationship between AC Transit and the local jurisdictions. Finally, bus stop furniture sends a message to the public about AC Transit. A clean, safe, and informative bus stop suggests that riding the bus is a practical, appealing, and easy alternative to driving and parking and acknowledges that bus riders deserve a dignified transit experience. Bus stop furniture only enhances the rider experience at bus stops when there is a well-managed, effective, and responsive program for shelters, benches and other bus stop elements that includes thorough maintenance and repairs. The Guidelines provides standards, methodology and guidance for ensuring that bus stop furniture can fully serve its purpose and be an amenity to the rider.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

There are no budgetary impacts associated with this report.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

For over twenty years, AC Transit has been administering a transit shelter contract that will expire in March 2023. Given this deadline and opportunity to revamp the transit shelter program, staff developed the Bus Stop

Furniture Guidelines to communicate and guide AC Transit's plan for bus stop furniture. The Bus Stop Furniture Guidelines include sections on furniture types and design, site conditions, guidelines and methodology for placing bus stop furniture, outreach, maintenance, and roles and responsibilities. District staff sought comments and feedback from the following:

- Departments: Accessible Services, Innovation & Technology, Legislative Affairs & Community Relations, Maintenance, Marketing & Communications, and Service Development & Planning,
- Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC): July 27th and October 10, 2022 meetings.
- Board of Directors: July 27, 2022 meeting

The AAC provided useful feedback emphasizing:

- the importance of both visual and audio information through signage at bus stops
- having an accessible path of travel and landing areas to and from bus stops
- addressing ways to curb vandalism on bus stop amenities
- ensuring that seating designs are wide enough for riders to sit on.

Based on feedback, staff have included sections on bus stop types and designs which includes seating, bus stop signage, and bus stop real-time audio and visual information. Staff also included a section on bus stop maintenance and accessibility which includes information on accessible paths of travel and addressing vandalism at bus stops.

Based on the feedback from the Board at the July 27, 2022, Board Meeting, staff also updated the guidelines section "Bus Stop Furniture Placement Methodology." This section provides analysis on the distribution of bus shelters based on the following factors: Person-Minutes, Percent of People of Color per Block Group, Percent of Low-Income People per Block Group. In addition to these factors, staff incorporated social services in the overall analysis and weighted scoring. Social services include locations that serve people with disabilities, senior housing, hospitals, healthcare clinics, or social service providers. A detailed breakdown of the analysis can be found in guidelines (see Attachment 1).

In conclusion, staff recommends that the Board consider adopting the Bus Stop Furniture Guidelines, which will help guide the future of the bus shelter program as the District transitions away from the advertising model provided by Clear Channel Outdoor for the past 20+ years.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

The guidelines have the following advantages for the District:

- It provides guidance for allocating limited bus stop furniture resources at locations that will impact the most bus riders.
- It lays out the needs to design, install, and maintain bus shelters and benches in the right-of-way. This could be a resource for outside agencies and local jurisdictions to reference.
- It shows the roles and responsibilities of AC Transit, the local jurisdictions, and third-party contractors.

Staff could not identify any disadvantages associated with this item, especially since this type of document did not previously exist for the District.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

Staff considered not developing the guidelines and continue to respond to one-off-requests for bus shelters and amenities as they come. Staff does not recommend this approach as this alternative is not the best use of the District's limited resources and bus shelters may not be placed at bus stops where they would be best used based on high ridership, important destinations (such as senior homes or social services), or long wait times.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

Staff Report 22-403 - AC Transit Bus Stop Furniture Guidelines

ATTACHMENTS:

1. AC Transit Bus Stop Furniture Guidelines

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In Collaboration with:

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Approved/Reviewed by:

Robert del Rosario, Director of Services Development and Planning
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Jill A. Sprague, General Counsel/Chief Legal Officer