



## **Board Policy No. 501**

### **Bus Stop Guidelines for Placement, Relocation, and Removal**

**ADOPTED: 12/89**

**RECENT AMENDMENT: 2/26/25**

**SEE ALSO: 545; 501A**

**SUBJECT CATEGORY: SECTION 500, PLANNING AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT**

**SUBSECTION: BUS STOPS**

**CONTROL DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND ENGINEERING**

#### **I. PURPOSE**

Bus stops are critical to the delivery of bus service to the public. The purpose of this Policy is to set forth AC Transit's (the District) guidelines for bus stop placement, relocation, and removal, including the decision-making processes involved and bus stop criteria of spacing, location, length, and accessibility. This policy also discusses the procedure for the placement of new bus stops and the review of stops for relocation or removal.

In addition to the decision-making processes, criteria and procedures discussed in this Policy, the District shall also take into consideration the process for review by District staff as described in Administrative Regulation 501A: Bus Stops. In adopting this Policy, the Board acknowledges that the District does not own, control or maintain the areas surrounding the bus stop or real property on which physical poles and shelters are installed<sup>1</sup>. The ultimate decision-making authority concerning the placement of a bus stop at a particular location rests with the city or jurisdiction in which the stop is located. This Policy is not intended to address other issues about bus stops ( i.e. cleanliness, damage, replacement of fixtures, etc. or temporary closures or detours), but to focus on the decision-making processes, criteria, and procedures for placement, relocation and removal of bus stops to improve the customer experience at current and future bus stop locations.

#### **II. PERSONS AFFECTED**

This Policy is applicable to the Board of Directors, Board Officers, District employees and any consultants or contractors that have a direct or indirect role in carrying out changes to bus stops, including but not limited to, placement, relocation, and removal. This Policy is also applicable to cities/local jurisdictions, affected property owners, the general public, and bus riders within the District's service area.

#### **III. DEFINITIONS**

**"Bus Stop"** means a place where a bus regularly stops to allow passengers on or off. This includes, but is not limited to standard bus stops, bus boarding islands, bus bulbs, bus stop parklets, bus rapid transit platforms, and bus stop layovers. See also, Administrative Regulation 501A.

<sup>1</sup> Certain Bus Stop Poles and shelters are owned by the District. To identify specific poles or shelters owned, controlled, or maintained by the District, please inquire with District staff.

**“Far-side”** means any bus stop located along the curb right after the intersection. **“Near-side”** means any bus stop located along the curb right before the intersection.

**“Mid-block”** means any bus stop located along the curb that is in the middle of a block between two intersections.

**“Controlled Intersection”** means any intersection that has traffic signals, stop signs, HAWK or beacon signals, rectangular round flash beacons (RRFB), or round about treatments.

**“Uncontrolled Intersection”** means any intersection that does not have traffic signals, stop signs, HAWK or beacon signals, RRFB, or round about treatments.

**“Crosswalk”** means any pedestrian right-of-way to cross the street; drivers must be aware of crosswalks and stop for pedestrians who are within them. They can be marked, by painted lines, or unmarked.

**“Bus bulb”** means curb extensions that align the bus stop with the parking lane, allowing buses to stop and board passengers without ever leaving the travel lane. Bus Bulbs at intersections also shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians.

#### IV. POLICY

This document serves to outline the decision-making processes and criteria involved in the placement, relocation and removal of bus stops within the AC Transit service area. Evaluation of the proposed placement, relocation or removal is completed using factors discussed below in Decision-Making Processes and Criteria for Location, Length, Spacing and Accessibility.

##### **Decision-Making Processes**

Determining bus stop placement, relocation and removal involves a balancing of guiding principles and bus stop criteria, including but not limited to, industry standards and statutory requirements.

##### **Bus Stop Criteria**

Criteria requirements set forth for locations, spacing, stop lengths, and accessibility.

Evaluation of a bus stop placement, relocation or removal is conducted by AC Transit Service Planning Staff and the Bus Stop Advisory Committee, an internal group made up of staff from various departments that are impacted by bus stops. Administrative Regulation 501A also provides the procedures for changing bus stops from an initial request intake to review and implementation.

#### **A. DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES**

##### **1. Coordination with Cities/Local Jurisdictions**

### The Role of AC Transit

AC Transit shall be responsive in how it addresses bus stop requests and foster a cooperative relationship with cities/local jurisdictions to implement solutions that promote the use of public transit, increase ridership, and improve the speed and reliability of bus service. The District shall provide timely and accurate data and recommendations to cities/local jurisdictions in order for them to make informed and equitable decisions concerning bus stop requests.

### Expectations of Cities/Local Jurisdictions

AC Transit expects cities/local jurisdictions to conduct a thorough and thoughtful process when considering bus stop requests. The Board recognizes that while cities/local jurisdictions have ultimate decision-making authority with respect to stops, cities/local jurisdictions should be responsible and accountable in a way that ensures that the greater good is served by balancing the concerns of the few with the benefits to the community and the interests of bus riders.

## 2. Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles provide direction for decision-making and evaluation of bus stop placement, relocation, and removal. These principles serve as foundational values and priorities that guide staff and stakeholders in making bus stop decisions regarding placement, relocation, and removal, that meet the needs of riders and the broader community.

**Safety:** Bus stop decisions related to placement, relocation and removal should take into account the safety of riders, operators, and pedestrians, including, but not limited to, implementing measures to mitigate risks and hazards at bus stops to the extent it is within the District's ability to do so.

Bus stops should endeavor to be placed in well-lit areas with accessible path-of-travel, clear signage, and designated waiting areas to prevent incidents and enhance security.

**Accessibility:** Accessibility requires designing and locating bus stops with consideration for the needs of diverse riders' demographics, including individuals with disabilities, seniors, and children.

Ensuring ADA compliance through ramp landing pads, stop waiting area grade, and curb cuts at surrounding crossings, to the furthest extent of the law, practicable.

Strategically locate stops to serve the needs of riders, considering proximity to residential areas, employment centers, schools, and other key destinations.

**Feasibility:** Feasibility of a bus stop location hinges on critical factors such as visibility, sidewalk conditions, ADA compliance, and supporting land uses. Community input plays a pivotal role in this assessment, as local residents, businesses, and organizations offer valuable insight into the practicality of the proposed bus stop placement. Their perspectives help gauge factors such as accessibility, safety concerns, and impacts on their daily lives.

Positive community input can bolster the feasibility of a bus stop placement by affirming its alignment with local needs and preferences. On the other hand, community opposition or concerns may signal potential challenges or unaddressed issues, causing staff to reconsider the viability of the proposed bus stop placement, relocation or removal.

**Reliability:** Reliability of bus service can be implemented through placement and design that facilitates efficient boarding and alighting processes, reducing dwell times, and streamlining rider flow.

Bus stop spacing should strategically balance rider accessibility and service reliability.

**Comfort:** Comfort consists of striving to provide inviting and pleasant environments by placing bus stops in locations with the potential for future amenities, such as seating and shelters, to offer protection from the elements and enhance the overall waiting experience.

AC Transit encourages cities to prioritize safe, well-designed seating at bus stops to improve the rider experience. Municipalities are responsible for bus stop seating and AC Transit supports efforts to enhance transit access through thoughtful design and placement. AC Transit provides the Bus Stop Furniture Guidelines to help cities determine furniture needs and specifications. Investing in quality bus stop furniture shows a commitment to public transit and the communities we serve.

## **B. Placement, Relocation, and Removal**

### **1. Bus Stop Placement**

AC Transit may consider adding a bus stop when:

- There is too large a gap in stop spacing between existing stops
- There is a new key destination, demand, or need (e.g. a large development with potential riders, such as a school, housing community or business)
- A request is made for a new stop or initiated by the means described in AR 501

### **2. Stop Relocations**

When considering the relocation of bus stops, ridership levels and potential rider impacts will be assessed. AC Transit may consider relocating bus stops under the following circumstances:

- The current stop presents an issue, such as safety concerns or conflicts with local activity, etc.
- A nearby location has improvements that make it a more suitable stop
- The relocation is part of a larger project (city, AC Transit, etc.)
- A pair stop is being relocated, and changing both locations together would improve safe crossings and rider navigability

### 3. Stop Removals

When considering the removal of bus stops, ridership levels and the potential impact on riders including the proximity and accessibility of alternative stops will be evaluated. AC Transit may remove stops under the following circumstances:

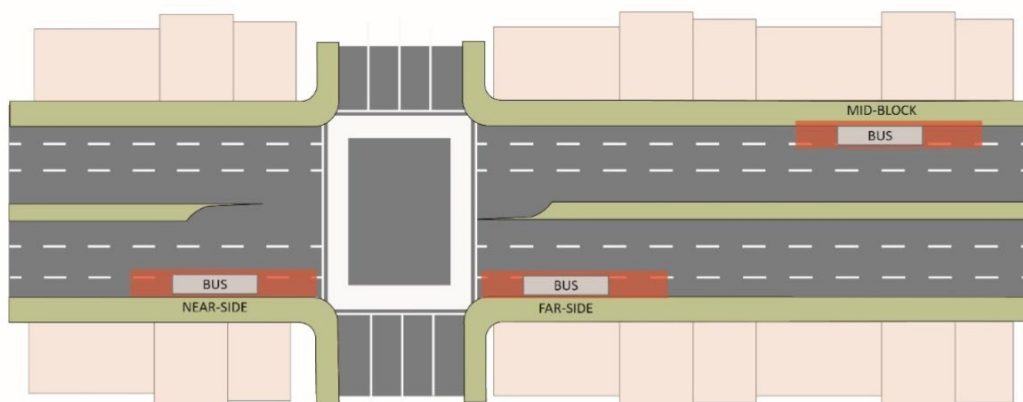
- The current location presents an issue, and no suitable alternative location is available
- The stop is part of a larger project or series of changes, such as optimizing bus stop spacing
- The removal impacts the paired stop, prompting consideration for the removal of both stops

## C. Criteria for Bus Stop Location, Length, Spacing, and Accessibility

### Bus Stop Location

Bus stops can be at one of three locations: far-side, near-side, or mid-block. Below are the preferred use cases and advantages of each location, with a preference for far-side stops whenever feasible.

### Bus Stop Placement Types



**Bus Stop Placement Types Trade-offs**

<b>Far-side</b>	
<p>Preferred at controlled and uncontrolled intersections. They are also preferable wherever buses turn left because they allow sufficient maneuvering distance from curb to left lanes to make the turn and allow buses to stop after clearing the intersection.</p>	
Advantages & When to Use	Disadvantages & When Not to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce conflict between right turning vehicles and stopped buses.</li> <li>• Eliminate sight-distance deficiencies on approaches to the intersection.</li> <li>• Encourage pedestrians to cross at the rear of the bus.</li> <li>• Require shorter maneuvering distance for the buses to enter and leave the curb.</li> <li>• At signalized intersections, buses can find gaps for re-entry into traffic flow.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A bus standing at a far-side stop can potentially obscure sight-distance to an automobile driver turning right from the cross street onto the street where the bus is located. This issue should be addressed by locating stops at controlled intersections.</li> <li>• Where the bus stop length is too short, the rear of the bus might obstruct the crosswalk and intersection.</li> </ul>

<b>Near-side</b>	
<p>Can be acceptable at controlled intersections when a far-side stop is deemed unsafe or impractical.</p>	
Advantages & When to Use	Disadvantages & When Not to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They interfere minimally at locations where traffic is heavier on the far-side than on the approach side of the intersection.</li> <li>• Bus drivers can use the intersection to re-enter traffic.</li> <li>• Eliminates double stopping, where the bus has to stop before and after an intersection.</li> <li>• Can be useful when facilitating an important transfer to reduce the need for customers to cross the street.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy vehicular right turns can cause conflicts, especially where a vehicle makes a right turn from the left of a stopped bus.</li> <li>• Bus may often obscure STOP signs, traffic signals, or other control devices.</li> <li>• Bus may often obscure pedestrian crossing in front of the bus from oncoming traffic.</li> </ul>

<b>Mid-block</b>	
<p>Should be used after evaluating that far-side and near-side stops are less optimal. Mid-block bus stops should not be placed in the middle of a T-intersection, where the bus could block the traffic signal or obscure pedestrians crossing. Mid-block locations are generally applicable in areas where multiple routes require long loading areas that might extend an entire block.</p>	
Advantages & When to Use	Disadvantages & When Not to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buses minimally interfere with sight-distance of both vehicles and pedestrians.</li> <li>• Waiting passengers assemble at less crowded sections of the sidewalk.</li> <li>• Might be preferable if the primary trip generator on a long block is mid-block and the walking distance is too far if placed at the near-side or far-side.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The removal of considerable curb parking may be required.</li> <li>• Pedestrians from cross streets may have to walk further to board the bus.</li> <li>• May encourage unsafe pedestrian crossings.</li> <li>• If located in the middle of a T-intersection, operators won't have clear direction whether to stop or proceed at a red light.</li> </ul>

**Bus Stop Length**

The following are minimum bus stop lengths criteria and standards for AC Transit bus stops. Bus stop length, spacing standards, and ADA requirements are all prerequisites for considering a potential bus stop location.

**In-Lane Bus Stop Lengths**

Stop Length Components	40' Bus	2 x 40' Buses	45' Bus	60' Bus	2 x 60' Buses	40' Bus and 60' Bus
<b>NEAR-SIDE STOPS</b>						
Bus length (ft)	40	80	45	60	120	100
Clear space between 2 buses (ft)	-	20	-	-	20	20
Daylighting from crosswalk (ft)	20	20	20	20	20	20
<b>Total near-side stop length (ft)</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>140</b>
<b>MID-BLOCK STOPS</b>						
Bus length (ft)	40	80	45	60	120	100
Clear space between 2 buses (ft)	-	20	-	-	20	20
<b>Total mid-block stop length (ft)</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>FAR-SIDE STOPS</b>						
Bus length (ft)	40	80	45	60	120	100
Clear space between 2 buses (ft)	-	20	-	-	20	20

Questions concerning interpretation of this Policy are to be referred to the General Counsel.

Daylighting from crosswalk (ft)	10	10	10	10	10	10
<b>Total far-side stop length (ft)</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>130</b>

**Pullout Bus Stop Lengths**

Stop Length Components	40' Bus	2 x 40' Buses	45' Bus	60' Bus	2 x 60' Buses	40' Bus and 60' Bus
<b>NEAR-SIDE BUS STOPS</b>						
Pull-in distance (ft)	50	50	55	65	65	65
Bus length (ft)	40	80	45	60	120	100
Clear space between 2 buses (ft)	-	20	-	-	20	20
Daylighting from crosswalk (ft)	20	20	20	20	20	20
<b>Total near-side stop length (ft)</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>205</b>
<b>FAR-SIDE BUS STOPS</b>						
Bus length (ft)	40	80	45	60	120	100
Clear space between 2 buses (ft)	-	20	-	-	20	20
Pull-out distance (ft)	20	20	20	20	20	20
Daylighting from crosswalk (ft)	20	20	20	20	20	20
<b>Total far-side stop length (ft)</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>MID-BLOCK BUS STOPS</b>						
Pull-in distance (ft)	50	50	55	65	65	65
Bus length (ft)	40	80	45	60	120	100
Clear space between 2 buses (ft)	-	20	-	-	20	20
Pull-out distance (ft)	20	20	20	20	20	20
<b>Total mid-block stop length (ft)</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>205</b>

**Additional Factors Impacting Stop Length**

**Paratransit:**

- The provided stop lengths do not include paratransit stop lengths. Paratransit stop length requirements differ from fixed-route bus stop length requirements. If incorporating a paratransit stop at a fixed route bus stop, add 47 feet (27 feet for the length of the vehicle, plus an additional 20 feet to exit the space) to the provided bus stop length.
- East Bay Paratransit (EBP) vans are not permitted to stop in no-stopping or no-parking zones, including bus stops. Accessible passenger loading zones are preferred for EBP curb access in areas with high parking occupancy rates.
- AC Transit staff will prioritize close coordination with jurisdictions to provide dedicated paratransit stops and not just accessible passenger loading zones.

**Bus bulbs/Curb extensions:**

- If a curb extension is placed at a bus stop with buses stopping in-lane, it must be, at minimum, as long as the stopping area length (i.e., the bus length, plus the clear space between buses if the stop is intended to serve multiple routes simultaneously) so the bus can pull up to the curb to board and alight passengers.
- If a curb extension is installed next to a pull-out bus stop, the curb alignment must be designed considering the necessary pull-in or pull-out taper.

### Bus Stop Spacing

Bus stop spacing standards establish preferred distances between stops for four different service types, with flexibility for exceptions based on factors like location, infrastructure, and safety considerations. These standards aim to ensure stops are accessible, safe, convenient, and reliable for riders. When considering the tradeoffs to make exceptions to either exceed or fall below the recommended stop spacing, the aforementioned guiding principles of safety, accessibility, feasibility, reliability, and comfort, can help inform the decision-making process.

### Bus Stop Spacing Standards

Service Type	Spacing (feet)	Explanation
Local/All-Nighter (OWL)/ Supplementary/ Microtransit	800-1,300	This service type has closely spaced stops that are typically within walking distance.
Rapid/ Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)	Rapid Bus Only: 1,300-1,900	This service type has stops that are typically within walking radius, but more widely spaced. This stop spacing should be applied on streets with a single local service that also provides frequent service.
	BRT: 1,300-1,900	
	Hybrid Rapid (Rapid with Local Service): 1,700-2,600	This service type has stops that are typically within walking radius, but more widely spaced. This stop spacing should be applied to streets that have both Rapid and underlying Local Service Types.
Freeway Express*	1,300-2,600	This service type has stops at major destinations along the Peninsula and in San Francisco and in the originating area it serves in the East Bay but runs nonstop between the two.

\* Where there is no underlying local service, the Freeway Express can act as a Local Service and use spacing criteria for Local Service.

**Other Spacing Considerations:** Reference Board Policy 545 – Density standards and service objectives, Distance to bus routes, and Route type tables.

### **Bus Stop Accessibility**

The passenger ramp landing zones of new or relocated bus stops shall meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to the furthest extent of the law practicable. For specific guidelines, see Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Guidelines for Transportation Facilities, Section 810.2 and Section 209.2.3.

AC Transit utilizes a variety of fleet types that have two, three, or four doors depending on the vehicle model. Ramps are located at the first or second door. Bus stops must have a clear accessible landing zone for the first two doors of all vehicles, to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to the furthest extent of the law, practicable. Right-of-way changes are the responsibility of the local jurisdiction. Bus stop amenities shall be placed to meet ADA standards. Page 11 shows AC Transit's bus door locations and ADA landing requirements by bus type.

## **V. AUTHORITY**

### **A. Board Authority**

The Board reserves the right to amend this Policy from time to time as it deems appropriate.

### **B. General Manager's Authority**

The General Manager shall issue any and all necessary administrative regulations required to implement this Policy, including the development of a process the District will use to evaluate and make timely recommendations concerning bus stop requests. The General Manager shall specify the criteria on which the evaluation shall be based, including but not limited to ridership impacts and any disproportionate effects of the proposed request.

## **VI. ATTACHMENTS**

### **ADA Landing Requirements**

