



Metro

Interoffice Memo

Date	June 27, 2006
To	Kymberleigh Richards Chair - Metro SFV Governance Council
THRU	Gary Spivack – Acting General Manager, Metro SFV Service Sector
From	Michael Brewer Service Development Manager Metro SFV Service Sector
Subject	Policy for Installing or Relocating Bus Benches and Shelters at Metro Bus Stops

At the last Sector Council meeting, Council and staff members initiated a discussion over policies pertaining to the location of street furniture associated with the implementation of Rapid Bus lines and the relocation of furniture in the event a bus stop is moved.

Issue

Many of Metro's 18,000 bus stops are outfitted with benches and shelters for passenger convenience. The City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) administers this process in cooperation with Metro and installation contractor, Viacom/Decaux. Listed below are a few of the City's guidelines for installing or relocating street furniture.

- Shelters, and other street furniture, should be placed at well-established bus stops to minimize future request for shelter relocation.
- Shelters should be placed at bus stops with significant boarding and alighting activity to maximize utility.
- Shelters may be relocated to accommodate construction projects or to minimize potential safety hazards.
- Shelter relocations are limited to 30 per year due to funding constraints. Once shelters are in place, they are costly to move.
- Shelters of the older variety were designed for one-time installation. Attempts to relocate them will likely damage their structural integrity and render them unusable.
- Shelters should be relocated only when all service to the bus stop is discontinued.

Bus benches must be moved by the contractor. In the past, Stops and Zones staff notifies the contractor that a bus stop is being relocated so that they can also move the benches at the identified location. Unfortunately, changes in Metro's and other services have affected numerous locations where shelters and benches have been installed; the contractor is backlogged on making modifications.

Where shelters are involved, some long standing installations use shelter furniture that is permanent. Moving these structures effectively destroys the assembly and eliminates the possibility of future consumer benefit. Hence, the City recommends against moving these structures. This saves resources, but creates some anomalies when the shelter is in a location other than the actual stop.

The MTA has restructured its services numerous times as part of service change packages, in response to complaints, and as a means to improve customer convenience. In the coming years as the agency continues with its implementation of the Metro Rapid and Metro Connections projects, more stops may need to be abandoned as a result of service realignments. Staff has set a goal to minimize the abandonment of stops where furniture exists and to coordinate with the City if relocation is warranted.

Metro Rapid

The County of Los Angeles is negotiating with the City for a percentage of revenues generated by advertisements to be displayed at Metro Rapid bus stations. The fee to be paid to the County is based on a possessory usage tax on the advertising installed on the street. This is the final issue to be resolved before Metro Rapid stations can be constructed and installed along Van Nuys and Sepulveda Boulevards.

Metro Planners believe this issue will be resolved shortly and the first stations will be installed in June 2007 or later. Even so, Metro Rapid staff must wait a period of time (minimum 1-year) to determine whether or not stops need to be moved, added or deleted along the route. Once the Metro rapid Station are installed, the locations will be considered permanent because of the electrical and other passenger based information systems that are incorporated into the design. Hence, changing or moving these stops in the future will be subjected to an extremely rigorous process that involves consultation and analysis of the utility of the selected location.

Van Nuys & Burbank Boulevards

Sector and Metro Planning staff approved the consolidation of the Metro Rapid and local bus stop at the intersection of Van Nuys and Burbank Boulevards. The move was prompted as a means to improve customer convenience for patrons that need to transfer from Line 156 to Line 233 or Metro Rapid, Line 761. The bus shelter installed at this location is over 20 years old and was designed for a one-time-only installation. Attempts to relocate this shelter will likely damage its structural integrity and render it unusable.

Staff recommends retaining the shelter in its existing location where it is currently serviced by Santa Clarita Bus Lines 793 and 798. In June 2007, a Metro Rapid Station and Shelter will be installed at the subject location to serve Line 761 riders. Unfortunately, a local bus shelter is not planned for this location. To avoid pedestrian conflicts, LADOT discourages the practice of installing both Metro Rapid and local bus shelters in the same block. Even so, the consolidation of these stops allows customers to minimize the need to cross both major streets to complete transfers.

Conclusion

The location of permanent stops for Metro Rapid buses as well as the movement of stops and associated street furniture must be coordinated with a variety of Metro, City, and contractor staffs. Some abandoned stops will continue to have street furniture located there. In those instances, staff evaluates and makes recommendations as part of its service packages whether or not the stop will be used by other service providers. In the one example cited on Van Nuys Boulevard, the street furniture remains because the stop is serviced by Santa Clarita Transit albeit not at the volume of Metro services. That particular stop is slated for a Metro Rapid station in the future and some of the existing street furniture (e.g. bus benches) may be relocated at that time. Under any circumstance, as the agency moves forward to restructure its services to minimize cost and increase customer convenience and access, staff will be mindful of potential stop abandonment to minimize any passenger confusion.