



## **Metro Transit**

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### **MEMO**

**TO:** TPC members  
**FROM:** C.S. Debo  
**DATE:** July 6, 2006  
**RE:** bus shelters/sites

Dear TPC members:

Our new technology has made it possible to provide boardings and alightings at the bus stop level with a high degree of accuracy<sup>1</sup>. Software upgrades have now made it possible to obtain accurate average boardings for a lengthy period of time, where in the past we've had to do "snap shots" to obtain a high level of accuracy.

The purpose of this information is to provide data useful in present and future discussions about:

- priorities as to where shelters should be located;
- opportunities to increase the number of shelters substantially through the acquisition of "Advertising Shelters" – for which an enabling Charter Ordinance Change Resolution will be referred to TPC shortly.

Some observations from the attached list of bus stop boardings and shelter locations:

- The attached summary shows average weekday boardings (in descending order from highest boardings) and where bus shelters are currently located. Pages 1-10 show all bus stops. The last two pages (after page 10) show only bus stops where a shelter and/or bench is located.
- The Survey includes Metro Routes 1 through 65 only. UW Campus Routes 80-82 were not included in the survey so campus bus stops show significantly fewer boardings than are actually the case. Also not included in the Survey are extra buses providing overload support primarily to Routes 38,28,14,4, and 60.
- The last time Metro acquired shelters in large numbers was 1989, when 48 were added. At that time the standard for consideration for shelters was 30 boardings on weekdays. There were fewer than 48 locations with 30 boardings at that time, so some were put in sites with fewer boardings. Since then five shelters were acquired with Transit Enhancements funds (2001-3), five replacement shelters have been put in as a result of the E. Wash Construction project and 3 more will be put in by the time the Project has been completed. Other than privately owned shelters which have been added, the only other new purchases have been for replacements for damaged shelters.
- As the list indicates: Generally speaking, shelters are provided at most bus stops where there are currently an average 50 boardings or more per day. Locations without shelters in this range are generally insufficient in area of the right-of-way to accommodate a shelter, or are on private property. They may also be locations where ridership has grown substantially in recent times, and should be considered high-priority candidates for location of shelters in the future.
- As the list indicates: Generally speaking, shelters located at bus stops with fewer than an average 50 boardings per day are there for historical reasons - they remain from another era when there was an opportunity for shelter

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1. Automatic Passenger Counters (APCs) are installed on 40 buses that are rotated through Metro routes. Staff has established a routine 4-day vehicle rotation process that allows all runs on regular routes to be surveyed every 4 days. This provides a very high level of accuracy to our surveys.

acquisition (see prior note). Some were at intersections of alphabetical routes where transfers were possible; some were provided by institutions (e.g. UW), some were part of municipal projects (e.g. Mall Concourse); some were provided in connection with development or re-development projects (e.g. Sherman Plaza).

- Metro has removed or moved shelters very infrequently in the past - mainly for excessive and repeated vandalism, at the request of police or of the neighborhood association. If they were originally put at a location, generally speaking – they are still there.

Metro's standard for guidance in placement of new shelters is found in the "Service Evaluation and Performance Measurement Program" document originally developed as part of the City's "Framework for Excellence" Program in 1999 (see below). The wording originates from prior Transit Development Programs (TDPs) for the Madison Urbanized Area prepared by the MPO, and may have a history going back even further in time in this community. The standard (minimum) has changed from 30 in 1989 to 50 at present.

"Shelters are a passenger amenity and are placed where they will have the greatest benefit:

1. A minimum of 50 boarding passengers (average weekday);
2. Proximity to housing for elderly and/or disabled persons;
3. At major generators served by multiple routes".

Funding for new bus shelters has been very limited in recent years. However staff has been successful in obtaining commitments for passenger amenities (and often related maintenance thereof) from large scale development and re-development projects as part of the Plan Review Process<sup>2</sup>. Amenities have been requested in the Plan Review Process, not as a reference to this standard, but in order to meet a broader Metro objective to increase passenger amenities in the system.

### **Present Opportunity**

A Resolution has been advanced to Common Council and will be referred to TPC shortly, that would make it possible for Metro to seek an advertising shelter proposal which would significantly increase its bus shelter inventory. The Resolution proposes a Charter Ordinance change which would allow advertising in shelters in the public right-of-way (where, for the most part, bus shelters are located). If the Charter Ordinance change were approved by Common Council, an RFP would be issued, similar to one issued in Milwaukee in the recent past, requesting proposals for the provision of 25 to 50 new shelters with ads in one panel of the shelter (far side from on-coming traffic in the adjacent roadway), with back-lighting which would provide lighting in shelter sites (where none currently exists), and daily maintenance of the "ad shelter" sites by the contractor. The contractor would select the sites for the new advertising shelters from among a list/map of current Metro shelter sites in Madison. Metro would then remove existing Metro bus shelters from those sites and place them elsewhere in the system, using the above-stated standard as a guide. Metro would continue to provide maintenance to shelters it owns and has maintained in the past. The RFP would also request a minimum of \$25,000 per year for the transit system, with opportunity for greater revenues dependent on advertising sales volume. The main purpose of this program would be acquire substantially more bus shelters for the benefit of Metro passengers.

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2. Reference: 2005 Annual Report and previous Annual Reports.