

Proposed Changes to Metro's Leased Space Policy – 2014

Full Wrap Policy

Background:

Metro's current Leased Space Policy allows for 20 full wrapped bus ads and unlimited partial wraps.

In 2013, during Metro's first year of the advertising program, there were only 3 full wrap buses sold for a total revenue of \$38,000. In 2014, there are 5 full wrap ad contracts in existence for a total of \$80,000. (No future contracts pending.)

Due to the high cost of production, Metro's salesperson does not place a heavy focus on selling full wrap advertising. Also due to this high cost, there is not a heavy demand by Metro's advertising clients.

Proposal Moving Forward

- Continue practice of not focusing on full wrap sales.
- Keep the option of 20 full wrap buses available so as to retain current full wrap clients and have available if a large-scale client made the request.

Content Policy

Background

Metro's current Leased Space Policy states it will accept all copy, graphics and photos except those that are obscene, libelous, or fraudulent. Metro will also not accept any ads for tobacco products.

In 2013, Metro experienced some negative customer/community feedback due to a partial wrap ad with a very graphic image. After reviewing with the City Attorney's office, it was determined that Metro could not reject the ad for reasons related to 1st Amendment/Freedom of Speech.

The City Attorney's office suggested Metro consider converting its program to a "non public forum" which would offer the possibilities of rejecting "opinion-based advertising" and only allowing advertisements that have a strictly commercial message.

By restricting "opinion-based advertising", several other current community organization advertisers might also fall under this ban including: Amnesty International, Deer Park Buddhist Center, Care Net Pregnancy Center of Dane County, Community Shares of Wisconsin, City of Madison-Rideshare. (Approximate revenue: \$20,000.)

Proposal Moving Forward:

Continue Metro's existing ad content policy of "accepting all copy, graphics and photos except those that are obscene, libelous, or fraudulent".

Free Advertising Policy

Background

Metro's current Leased Space Policy allows for free space to not-for-profit organizations.

Metro receives a large number of requests of free public service ad space, and it is not able to facilitate them all. The City of Attorney's office has also recommended that Metro be compensated for all advertising placed on its buses.

Proposal Moving Forward:

- Eliminate free advertising (PSA) policy
- Continue to offer a 20% rate card discount to all non-profit organizations