



Board Policy No. 501

Bus Stop Guidelines

ADOPTED: 12/89

RECENT AMENDMENT: 8/7/19

SEE ALSO: 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 future bus stop placement, which includes spacing, location, length, and accessibility. In addition to the factors 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 bus stop areas and that 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 such as complaints about cleanliness, damage, replacement of fixtures, etc. or temporary closures or detours.

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, and the general public 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.

"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 lights, yield signs, or stop signs.

“Uncontrolled Intersection” means any intersection that does not have traffic lights, yield signs, or stop signs.

“Marked Crosswalk” means any pedestrian right-of-way marked by paint lines; Drivers must be aware of crosswalks and stop for pedestrians who are within a marked crosswalk.

“Unmarked Crosswalk” means any pedestrian right-of-way not marked by painted lines; Drivers must be aware of crosswalks and stop for pedestrians who are within a unmarked crosswalk.

IV. POLICY

A. Coordination with Cities/Local Jurisdictions

1. 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.

2. 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.

B. Guidelines

1. Bus Stop Spacing

Bus stops should be close enough for riders to walk to, yet far enough apart to minimize delays caused by pulling in and out of traffic, deceleration/acceleration, door opening/closing, and ramp deployment. To minimize delay and increase bus frequency and reliability, the maximum bus stop spacing per service type has been established. The matrix in **Table A** details bus stop spacing standards for the four different service types.

Table A – Bus Stop Spacing Standards

Service Type	Spacing (feet)	Explanation
Local (Trunk, Feeder, All-Nighter, and Supplementary)	800-1,300	This service type has closely spaced stops that are typically within walking radius.
Rapid Bus/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.
	Bus Rapid Transit 1,300-1,900	
	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.
Transbay 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.
Flexible or Community Circulator	800-TBD	This service type's stop spacing varies. This service type may service existing or previous local service stops.
* Where there is no underlying local service, the Transbay Express Line can act as a Local Service and use spacing criteria for Local Service.		

2. Bus Stop Location

Bus stops can be at one of three locations: far-side, near-side, or mid-block.

Far-side Bus Stops are 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, and allow buses to stop after clearing the intersection.

Advantages of a far-side bus stop include the following:

- They reduce conflicts between right turning vehicles and stopped buses;
- They eliminate sight-distance deficiencies on approaches to the intersection;
- They encourage pedestrians to cross at the rear of the bus;
- They require shorter maneuvering distance for the buses to enter and leave moving traffic;

- At signalized intersections, buses can find gaps for re-entry into the traffic stream.

Disadvantages of a far-side bus stop include the following:

- A bus standing at a far-side stop obscures 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.
- Where the bus stop is too short, the rear of the bus will obstruct the cross street.

Near-side Bus Stops can be acceptable at Controlled Intersections when a far-side stop is deemed unsafe or impracticable.

Advantages of a near-side bus stop include the following:

- They interfere minimally at locations where traffic is heavier on the far-side than on the approach side of the intersection.
- Bus drivers can use the intersection to re-enter traffic.
- Passengers generally board buses close to a crosswalk.

Disadvantages of a near-side bus stop include the following:

- Heavy vehicular right turns can cause conflicts, especially where a vehicle makes a right turn from the left of a stopped bus;
- Bus may often obscure STOP signs, traffic signals, or other control devices as well as pedestrian crossing in front of the bus;
- Where the Bus Stop is too short, the rear of the bus will be in the traffic lane.

Mid-block Bus Stops should only be used when no other alternatives are available and when there are Mid-block Bus Stops should not be placed near a Marked Crosswalk at an Uncontrolled T-intersection. Mid-block locations are also generally applicable in areas where multiple routes require long loading areas that might extend an entire block.

Advantages of mid-block bus stops include the following:

- Buses minimally interfere with sight-distance of both vehicles and pedestrians;
- Waiting passengers assemble at less crowded sections of the sidewalk.

Disadvantages of mid-block bus stops include the following:

- The removal of considerable curb parking may be required;
- Pedestrians from cross streets may have to walk farther to board the bus.

Criteria for Choosing a Bus Stop Location

- New Bus Stops should be located on the far-side of Controlled Intersections where there is a Marked Crosswalk. If physical curb treatment renders far-side impractical, locate bus to the near-side of the Controlled Intersection where there is a Marked Crosswalk;
- New Bus Stops at Uncontrolled Intersections with Marked Crosswalks should be located on the far-side;

- Locations at Uncontrolled Intersections with Unmarked Crosswalks should be avoided.

3. Bus Stop Length

Buses should have enough curb length to pull up parallel to the curb. When buses are required to pull out from traffic, stop lengths accommodate for transitions in and out of traffic. **Table D** below details the minimum bus stop lengths for pull-out stops and bus stop layovers:

Table D – Minimum Pull-out Stop Lengths

Stop Position	Type of Vehicle and Stop Length (Ft.)				
	40' Bus	2 x 40' Buses	45' Bus	60' Bus	2 x 60' Buses
Near-side	100	160	110	120	185
Far-side	65	125	65	100	165
Mid-block	120	185	125	145	210

4. Bus Stop Accessibility

The wheelchair ramp land zones (outlined in Appendix A) of new or relocated bus stops shall meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For specific guidelines, see Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Guidelines for Transportation Facilities, Section 810.2 and Section 209.2.3

The District utilizes a variety of fleet types that have two, three, or four doors depending on the vehicle model. Ramps are located in the first or second door. Bus stops must have a clear ADA landing zone for the first two doors of all vehicles, to the maximum extent practical, in order to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Right-of-way changes are the responsibility of the local jurisdiction. Bus stop amenities shall be placed so as to meet ADA standards. Appendix A shows the District’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.

APPENDIX A: AC Transit ADA Landing Requirements by Bus Fleet Type

