

2. Alternative Strategies and Measures

2.2 Enhance Bicycle and Pedestrian Access to Transit

First Impressions Count!

The public's first impression of bus transit and available services is the bus stop or approach to the bus stop from a side street or intersection. Project For Public Spaces, PPS, a New York based non-profit that advocates "placemaking", has conducted numerous observations and user surveys in public spaces, including transit stops. According to PPS: "Carefully placed stops and amenities introduced at and around bus stops help to improve peoples comfort, engender socialization, increase pedestrian activity and positively affect perceptions of safety and security. In addition, art, information and services contribute to a sense of community. Often small-scale design features and enhancements add significantly to the perception that a street, bus stop, or public space, is an important place in the community, encouraging more pedestrian activity and community use."

Context Sensitive Street Design increases opportunities for bus (and also rail) transit to become efficient, attractive transportation options. Some operational features preferred by bus transit operators may conflict with the needs of automobiles, cyclists or pedestrians. Such conflicts should be addressed and resolved during the planning and conceptual design phase of the Context Sensitive Street Design project.

Bikes and Buses make Great Partners!

Bikes on buses is a good public transportation policy and a good inter-modal marriage. At the origin of a trip, transit riders are generally willing to walk a few minutes to catch the bus, typically 5-6 minutes in most communities. Based on an average walking speed of around 260 feet per minute, a majority of bus riders would consider walking up to a distance of 1/4 mile to the nearest bus stop, the service area of a commuter bus route. If bikes are allowed on buses, as is the practice in many communities across the US, bicyclists would ride further than 1/4 mile to a bus stop. This means potential new transit riders by extending the transit service area with a minor investment in installing and maintaining bike racks on buses. It follows that at the destination end of the trip, the streets are appropriately designed to accommodate bicycle operation and that adequate bike parking facilities are available.

To ensure the bicyclists' safety when utilizing bus bike racks, transit agencies can institute a simple one-time permit process and training program. For a nominal fee, bikers can attend a short class, demonstrating how to load, secure and remove bicycles from bus bike racks and receive a lifetime permit to take bikes on public transportation.



Undesirable bus stop placement.



Well placed/designed bus stops encourage use and create a sense of community.

Source: Project for Public Spaces

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Transit contributes to a higher quality of life in the Atlanta Region in many ways:

- Efficient: Because transit transports more passengers per vehicle, it makes more efficient use of existing investments in the street system.
- Air quality: Fewer vehicle trips mean less congestion, less total travel time, and less impact on air quality.
- Place-making: Transit encourages pedestrian activity around transit stops, contributing to vitality, security and a sense of community.
- Jobs and economic development: Transit service can help lower cost by reducing the number of parking spaces and influence siting decisions by small business and major employers.
- Public safety: Transit-oriented development and vital, urban neighborhoods help encourage round-the-clock activity, creating a safer pedestrian environment and discouraging crime.
- Youth and Seniors: The quality of life for young and old can be enhanced by helping people with disabilities and teenagers access necessary services and recreational, educational and cultural activities.
- Community revitalization: Transit has demonstrated its ability to serve as a catalyst for reinvestment and encourage revitalization of older neighborhoods.
- Link jobs and housing: Transit can help more employees get to work without using a car.

See **Section 4.5** for detailed criteria of bus stop placement and design, including the topics:

- Closest Bus Stops
- Compatibility with Adjacent Land Uses
- Adequate Sight Distance
- Minimize Travel Time Delay
- Impact on Traffic Signal
- Pedestrian Linkage / Crossing
- Adequate Bus Maneuvering