

Government of the District of Columbia

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B



[DRAFT] RESOLUTION #4B-23-0301

Calling on District Department of Transportation to Assess Need for Bus Shelter Installations and Establish Dedicated Program for Installation and Maintenance of Bus Shelters Across DC Adopted March 27, 2023

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B (Commission) takes note of the following:

- As noted in the District Department of Transportation's [Bus Priority Plan](#), the District's bus system is the backbone of the transportation network, providing critical connections for residents to jobs, schools, healthcare, and other destinations. Because only 30 percent of residents live in a neighborhood easily accessible by Metrorail, the bus is the primary public transportation option for residents in many neighborhoods. [People who ride the bus are disproportionately low-income and non-white](#), with almost half of District Metrobus riders making under \$30,000 per year and 79 percent identifying as people of color.
- Bus shelters are an essential piece of social infrastructure that provide basic dignity, safety, and rest for bus riders, as well as protection from weather including rain, snow, wind, and extreme heat. The District Department of Energy and the Environment's "[Keep Cool DC](#)" Plan to address increasing threats of extreme heat caused by climate change recommends that DC "[i]nvest in additional cooling strategies such as ... bus shelters along busy transit corridors. Residents reported struggling with heat during commutes, especially when waiting for the bus." See also Keya Chatterjee, Delia Houseal & Robb Dooling, "[Here's what we can do to make transit more equitable in DC](#)," *Greater Greater Washington* (Feb. 3, 2021) ("The climate crisis has meant more heavy downpours, which means that bus riders are more often in need of shelter from rain events that are far more than the summer thunderstorms we are used to in DC.").
- Bus shelters increase safety for bus riders, pedestrians, and other road users. They are clearly-designated locations where pedestrians arrive,

wait, and depart – all in close proximity to motorists and vehicles (including heavy commercial vehicles). Like crosswalk treatments, which can [reduce the need for pedestrians to “compete with motorists for space as they approach” the stations](#), bus shelters are highly-visible treatments that delineate protected space for bus riders near transit stations.

- While there are over 3,000 bus stops in the District of Columbia, there are [only 711 total bus shelters](#) – leaving approximately 2,289 bus stops without shelters (or less if there are multiple shelters at a single stop). To the Commission’s knowledge, the District Department of Transportation has not provided information regarding the number of bus stops that have some other form of seating like benches. A District Department of Transportation representative has indicated that “[n]ew shelters are generally added as part of DDOT capital infrastructure projects occurring along high ridership corridors, which may change the configuration of the boarding area. Additional shelter installation requests depend on available inventory, require ensuring location is accessible and ADA compliant, completion of vendor location assessment to determine public space right-of-way, stop has a minimum of 50 boardings, and available funding.” To the Commission’s knowledge, there has not been an audit of locations in need of and eligible for bus shelters or another form of seating.
- [A plurality of these 711 bus shelters are concentrated in Wards 2 and 3](#), whereas the [highest average daily bus boardings by route](#) in 2023 to date were the 70 Bus (through Wards 4 and 1), the W4 Bus (through Wards 8 and 7), and the X2 Bus (through Wards 7, 6, and 5); and the highest average daily bus boardings for the past ten years (from 2013 through 2023) were the 70 Bus, the X2 Bus, and the B2 Bus (through Wards 5 and 4). The concentration of bus shelters in Wards 2 and 3 does not match usage and reflects existing inequities throughout DC. In addition, studies have shown that [bus shelters increase overall bus ridership](#), indicating that additional installations would fuel additional demand on these popular bus lines.
- Existing bus shelters are [uncomfortable and fail to accommodate riders](#). They have hostile anti-homeless design that includes bumps and a seat that slopes forward to prevent individuals from sleeping or resting. Wide benches, back- and armrests, and handrails are important [accessibility features](#) to ensure use by residents of all ages and abilities, including seniors, residents with mobility issues, residents with children, residents carrying many items, or residents who need to rest.
- The District Department of Transportation currently relies on a Bus Shelter Franchise Agreement with Clear Channel Outdoor, a private outdoor advertising company, for the installation of new bus shelters. The Bus Shelter Franchise Agreement [only allows for 788 bus shelters to be installed by Clear Channel Outdoor](#). It gives exclusive installation

rights to Clear Channel Outdoor for bus shelters that include advertising but allows the independent installation of bus shelters if they do not include advertising. The Bus Shelter Franchise Agreement is scheduled to expire in 2025, with a notification of renewal period beginning in 2024.

- The [Metro for DC Amendment Act of 2022](#) calls for funding to install and maintain bus shelters in areas of high transportation need or historically underserved communities. Neighboring jurisdictions, including Montgomery County, have [dedicated capital programs](#) for the improvement of bus stops, including funding for the installation of new bus shelters and benches and replacement of existing bus shelters and benches. Mayor John J. Bauters, City of Emeryville, California, and his staff recently committed to and [installed within seven months quick-build benches at every bus stop in their city](#) that did not have one.
- As Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B has [previously stated](#): “Commissioners in Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B have worked to install bus shelters within the Commission area but have learned that bus shelters are provided via a franchise agreement. In one specific instance, a bus shelter was approved, but has not been installed because of an outdated ‘Bus Shelter Franchise Agreement’ that does not meet needs. The Commission does not understand the interest in providing bus shelters via franchise agreement, particularly when the agreement is not meeting current needs.” *See also* [Letter](#) re Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Priorities (Apr. 25, 2022) (calling for “increas[ing] District funding for bus shelters beyond what is currently provided in the contract with Clear Channel Adshel to meet increased demand for safe and inviting transit stops in every neighborhood.”); [Letter](#) re Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Priorities (Mar. 22, 2021) (calling for funding “to reduce barriers to transit and ensure better service for our communities, including through the proposed Metro for DC Amendment Act of 2020, introduced by Councilmember Charles Allen (Ward 6), to improve access to bus service and increase transit affordability for District residents.”).
- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B believes a dedicated program for the installation and maintenance of bus shelters and seating at bus stops across the District of Columbia would better and more equitably meet need than the existing Bus Shelter Franchise Agreement with Clear Channel Outdoor.
- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B is thankful for the work of Commissioner Santiago Lakatos, ANC 1B04, and Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1B’s Transportation Committee on the issue of bus shelters, which informed this Resolution.

RESOLVED:

- That Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B calls on the District Department of Transportation to evaluate all bus stops to determine the number of stops eligible for bus shelters or other seating and create a dedicated program for the installation and maintenance of bus shelters and seating at all eligible bus stops across the District of Columbia.
- That Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B calls on the District Department of Transportation to consider the concerns of an insufficient number of bus shelters and inadequate design standards should it be unable to create a dedicated program for the installation and maintenance of bus shelters and seating at bus stops across the District of Columbia and expand the Bus Shelter Franchise Agreement with Clear Channel Outdoor to better and more equitably meet need.
- That Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B calls on the DC Council, in coordination with the Executive and the District Department of Transportation, to consider both equity in installations of bus shelters, as well as systematizing installation through tying installation to installation of other road and sidewalk work, traffic calming, and traffic safety infrastructure.
- That Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B calls on the DC Council, in coordination with the Executive and the District Department of Transportation, to determine if funding for installation and maintenance of bus shelters included in the Metro for DC Amendment Act of 2022 can support a dedicated program for the installation and maintenance of bus shelters and seating at bus stops across the District of Columbia.
- That Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B calls on the DC Council, in coordination with the Executive and the District Department of Transportation, to ensure maximum utilization of available federal and other funding to support a dedicated program for the installation and maintenance of bus shelters and seating at bus stops across the District of Columbia, including possible DC Safe Routes to School Program funding under the Federal Highway Administration, funding under the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority funding for accessibility measures.

FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Commission designates Commissioner Erin Palmer, ANC 4B02, Commissioner Evan Yeats, ANC 4B04, and Commissioner Alison Brooks, ANC 4B08, to represent the Commission in all matters relating to this Resolution.

FURTHER RESOLVED:

That, in the event the designated representative Commissioners cannot carry out their representative duties for any reason, the Commission authorizes the Chair to designate another Commissioner to represent the Commission in all matter relating to this Resolution.

FURTHER RESOLVED:

That, consistent with DC Code § 1-309, only actions of the full Commission voting in a properly noticed public meeting have standing and carry great weight. The actions, positions, and opinions of individual commissioners, insofar as they may be contradictory to or otherwise inconsistent with the expressed position of the full Commission in a properly adopted resolution or letter, have no standing and cannot be considered as in any way associated with the Commission.

ADOPTED by voice vote at a regular public meeting (notice of which was properly given, and at which a quorum of __ members was present) on March 27, 2023, by a vote of _ yes, _ no, _ abstentions.