

# Bus Stop & Amenities Design Guidelines

## Executive Summary



**North Central RTD**

July 2024



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bus stops are the “front door” of transit systems. Their location, design and maintenance influence how riders experience transit service. This document provides guidance for North Central Regional Transit District (NCRTD) Blue Bus and their partners to ensure transit is a safe, accessible, and convenient experience for customers. The Bus Stop and Amenities Design Guidelines is a tool to help NCRTD and other municipal and community partners deliver transportation choices that connect people, jobs and the community in a convenient, consistent and safe manner. The intent of these guidelines is to facilitate the consistent siting, design and management of either existing or proposed stops throughout the 10,000 square-mile NCRTD service area.

Well-designed bus stops enhance the transit customer experience, decrease perceived wait times for transit services and can increase ridership. NCRTD acknowledges that stop design and available amenities have an impact on people’s lives and their likelihood to use public transit. As a rural transit system with urban transit service levels in Española and Taos, this document provides a tool to develop a wide-ranging yet consistent customer experience for riders at bus stops across the Blue Bus system.



## What is in the Guidelines?

The information in these guidelines will be useful to anyone involved in the planning, design, construction, maintenance and/or use of stops: community members, transit staff, planners at the municipal, county, and state levels, as well as developers and private landowners. These guidelines may be used by different audiences to assist them with their associated responsibilities and needs regarding bus stop placement and design.

Section	What Questions It Answers
Introduction	What are design guidelines? Who are they for?
Bus Stop Spacing and Placement	Where do bus stops go? What factors are important to determine where bus stops are located?
Stop Configurations	What do bus stops look like in the street context?
Accessibility	What ADA design standards are applicable at bus stops? How does NCRTD want to go beyond ADA to provide better access to bus stops?
Bus Stop Modifications	What is the process for changing bus stops?
Bus Stop Types	What are the different types of bus stops across the system? How do they differ in terms of their minimum, preferred, and optional amenities?
Bus Stop Amenities	What considerations are important for the amenities included at stops?
Bus Stop Amenity Enhancement Process	How do we prioritize bus stops and how do we upgrade them?



## Community Engagement Highlights

We approached community engagement for the development of these design guidelines with a focus on access to participation. To engage a wide range of customers who use NCRTD's services, we wanted to meet people where they are, in a way that fits with their schedule and their routine. In addition to creating an online survey and hosting a series of focus groups, the project team surveyed people waiting at Transit Centers and on-board buses in an effort to better reach Blue Bus riders.

The community input we received highlights the importance of considering local context for developing and implementing the bus stop design guidelines. We heard that amenities for bus stops need to cater to the environment in which they're situated. That context sensitivity includes how to get to bus stops, the services and destinations people need to reach, and balancing technological updates with the technology people can realistically access.

## Bus Stop Types

NCRTD has six bus stop types including Frontier Stop, Standard Stop I, Standard Stop II, Transit Center, Rural Rapid Transit Station, and Park and Ride.

Frontier Stop, Standard Stop I, Standard Stop II are classified into types based on three criteria:

- **How many routes serve a stop**
- **The level of ridership at a stop**
- **The key destinations served by each stop**



### ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

4 Focus Groups

52 Survey Responses

>\$17k

The salary made by 50% of survey respondents

### Bus Stop Shelters

The most desired amenity voiced during engagement



## Transit Center

### Vital

- Sign & Pole
- Route Map & Schedule
- Concrete Pad
- Bench
- Trash Bin
- Enhanced Signage
- Shelter
- Bike Racks
- Lighting
- Shade
- Real Time Information

### Recommended

- Long-Term Bike Storage
- Public Wi-Fi
- Public Art
- Bike Share
- Micromobility
- Carshare
- EV Charging
- Safety & Security Features
- Personal Device Charging
- Public Bathrooms

Transit centers, as the places where routes connect, are focal points for the network. They are facilities with the highest use and strongest profile in the community. As a result, they need to be accessible, safe, comfortable, well maintained, and well-designed facilities. Most modern transit centers are also multimodal, with a trend towards mobility hubs that offer access to a variety of transportation options and services.

**Transit centers are classified by NCRTD rather than meeting specific criteria.**



## Rural Rapid Transit (RRT) Station

### Vital

- |                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Sign & Pole          | • Lighting              |
| • Route Map & Schedule | • Enhanced Signage      |
| • Concrete Pad         | • Shelter               |
| • Public Art           | • Bike Racks            |
|                        | • Real Time Information |
|                        | • Bench                 |

### Recommended

- |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Long-Term Bike Storage | • Micromobility              |
| • Public Wi-Fi           | • Safety & Security Features |
| • Shade                  | • Personal Device Charging   |
| • Bike Share             | • Public Bathrooms           |

Rural Rapid Transit (RRT) stations will serve routes identified as RRT. These stations are brand identified and provide enhanced amenities to match the enhanced service.

**RRT stations are classified by NCRTD rather than meeting specific criteria.**



## Park-and-Ride

### Vital

- Sign & Pole
- Route Map & Schedule
- Bench
- Trash Bin
- Enhanced Signage
- Shelter
- Lighting
- Concrete Pad

### Recommended

- Bike Racks
- Long-Term Bike Storage
- Shade
- Real Time Information
- Public Art
- Bike Share
- Micromobility
- Carshare
- EV Charging
- Safety & Security Features
- Personal Device Charging
- Public Bathrooms

Park-and-rides are key connectors between different modes of transportation across the region including bus riders, carpools, and in some cases microtransit and bicycles. Park-and-rides require a set of amenities that make transfers between different modes of transportation comfortable, safe, and convenient.

**Park-and-rides are classified by NCRTD rather than meeting specific criteria.**



## Frontier Stop

Vital	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign &amp; Pole</li> <li>Route Map &amp; Schedules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Base Course Pad</li> </ul>
Recommended	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concrete Pad</li> <li>Bench</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lighting</li> <li>Enhanced Signage</li> <li>Safety &amp; Security Features</li> </ul>

Frontier bus stops have the lowest daily ridership across the system and mostly serve 1 bus route. They are located in more remote and less populated regions of NORTD’s service area and require additional consideration based on the surrounding infrastructure. These stops are in areas with less reliable internet or cell phone data services and may lack sidewalks or convenient pedestrian crossings. In response, these stops need different answers to accessibility challenges than those typical of ADA compliance and amenities that have less reliance on technology take priority. **There are currently 176 Frontier Stops.**

### FRONTIER STOP CRITERIA:

Routes Served: 1      Average Daily Boardings: Less than 3      Destinations Served: Low





## Standard Stop I

Vital	
• Sign & Pole	• Concrete Pad
• Route Map & Schedule	• Bench
Recommended	
• Trash Bin	• Lighting
• Enhanced Signage	• Safety & Security Features
• Shelter	

These bus stops experience relatively low ridership, and many serve only 1 bus route. While these stops likely do not serve many destinations, they may provide access to key outdoor destinations including hiking, cycling, and rafting areas. Because they range widely in terms of curb condition, ADA compliance, and room available for investment, these bus stops have a minimum set of amenities. Stops that qualify as Frontier Stops but are either within an Urban Area (according to Census 2020 data) or are within a half-mile of public access trails are upgraded to Standard Stop I. **There are currently 218 stops in this category.**

### STANDARD STOP I CRITERIA:

Routes Served: 1-2    Average Daily Boardings: 3-15    Destinations Served: Low-Medium



## Standard Stop II

### Vital

- Sign
- Pole
- Route Map
- Route Schedule
- Bus Stop Number
- QR Code Information
- Concrete Pad
- Bench
- Trash Bin
- Shelter
- Lighting
- Next Bus Text Code

### Recommended

- Enhanced Signage
- Bike Racks
- Long-Term Bike Storage
- Shade
- Bike Share
- EV Charging
- Safety & Security Features
- Public Bathrooms
- Micromobility
- Public Wi-Fi
- Safety & Security Features
- Real Time Info
- Public Art
- Carshare
- Personal Device Charging

Bus stops fall under this category either because they have relatively high ridership and/or they serve a significant number of critical and key destinations. Amenities like shelters, lighting, and wi-fi that are typically reserved for stops with high ridership and level of service are also important to making sure people have a safe and comfortable environment to wait for the bus. These bus stops have a longer list of preferred amenities that are recommended to be included where space and funding allow. **There are currently 36 stops in this category.**

## STANDARD STOP II CRITERIA:

Routes Served: 2+    Average Daily Boardings: 15+    Destinations Served: Medium-High

## Amenity Enhancement Process

The Amenity Enhancement Process identifies the amenity needs of all NCRTD bus stops and scores the stops to determine which needs should be met with the resources available. This makes it easier for NCRTD to make cohesive decisions and be more transparent with the public. These are the following steps for amenity distribution process.

### STEP 1 – IDENTIFY AMENITY NEEDS

Using stop inventory data developed and maintained by the agency, a list of amenity needs should be created for each stop. If unit costs are documented for each amenity type, total costs to meet stop type amenities levels can be developed to understand the level of investment required at each stop. The stop inventory needs to be regularly updated as stops are improved in order to keep an up-to-date inventory.

### STEP 2 – PRIORITIZE STOPS

All stops in the system are scored and prioritized based on the Amenity Enhancement Process. The amenity enhancement process prioritizes bus stops based on the followings scoring criteria:

**Stop Activity:** 24% of total score

**Historically Marginalized Communities:** 24% of total score

**People Facing Disproportionate Burden:** 48% of total score

**Customer Requests:** 4% of total score

While the prioritization process is meant to highlight bus stops with high needs that serve disadvantaged communities, it is intended to be a planning tool for identifying who will be affected by amenity upgrades and its impact on the total transit network.

### STEP 3 – ALLOCATE RESOURCES

Based on the time when financial resources become available, funds can be distributed starting with the top priority stops to purchase amenities to bring the stops up to the newly established stop type amenity standards. NCRTD may determine to allocate funds in buckets based on classification type, or solely based on priority scoring. With over 400 bus stops, this process will take time and be repeated as more funds are available to bring stops up to the standards incrementally over time.

There are different ways that prioritization can inform near-, medium-, and long-term implementation strategy.

#### **Near-Term: Highest Score Strategy**

One approach for near-term funding and implementation is to address the vital needs at bus stops with the highest scores. Some considerations for how to implement bus stops based on the highest scoring stops are the following:

##### **Top 5 Highest Scoring for All Stop Types**

Funding could be equally distributed among the top 5 scoring bus stops by type. For example, the top 5 Frontier stops, top 5 Standard Stop Is, and top 5 Standard Stop IIs. All of these top 5 stops would be upgraded to have all vital amenities installed first.

##### **Estimated Costs for Improving Top 5 Stops by Type\***

Stop Type	Estimated Cost
Frontier	\$76,692
Standard Stop I	\$55,506
Standard Stop II	\$44,478
All	\$176,676

##### **Top 15 Highest Scoring Stops**

Another approach could be the top 15 stops have all vital amenities installed regardless of stop type.

##### **Cost Estimation for Top 15 Highest Scoring Stops: \$121,254\***

*\*Cost estimations include unit costs and do not include installation and maintenance costs*

## **Medium-Term: Stop Type Standard Strategy**

With more time and funding available, the standard for vital amenities by stop type should be reached for all stops of that type. For example, all frontier stops need a sign and pole, route map and schedule, and base course or concrete landing pad, regardless of their prioritization scores. Focusing on maintaining the standard vital amenities at all stops of each bus stop type is an important effort when resources become available.

## **Long-Term Strategy: Proactive Planning Strategy**

In the long-term, these design guidelines are meant to inform the overall composition of NCRTD's transit network.

## **STEP 4 – UPDATE & MAINTAIN DATA**

The Stop Type Classification should be updated on an annual basis to ensure that stop types are upgraded as needed. At the very least, new bus stops or bus stops with updated service should be classified on a yearly basis. Performing the Stop Type Classification will include updating the average daily ridership and routes served by bus stop on a yearly basis. The key destinations analysis should be performed on a 5-year basis and updated in the Stop Type Classification.

The Amenity Enhancement Prioritization method should be applied to stops on a 5-year basis. Between the 5-year cycles, staff should update ensure bus stop types are updated and all improvements at bus stops are tracked within the bus stop inventory.