



CHAPTER 6

TRANSIT STATIONS

One of the keys to creating lively, compact and walkable communities is the availability of transportation options that provide convenient alternatives to the personal automobile.

As Chapter 5 of this document explains, streets can be designed to accommodate buses and trains as well as pedestrians, bicyclists and automobiles. However, public transit also depends upon off-street transit stations, including bus depots; off-street trolley and commuter rail stops; and intermodal stations, where people can transfer between buses, trains and commuter shuttles. This chapter explains how off-street transit stations can be designed so they are conveniently located and universally accessible.

6.1 Location and Features



This major transit station is located at San Diego State University.

To encourage people to use buses, trains and commuter shuttles, transit stations must be comfortable and logically configured. They must also be accommodating to pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers alike.

6.1.1 Station Location

Transit stations are likely to draw more riders if they are located in areas that attract many visitors and workers, and if they provide nearby amenities that benefit commuters.

- ◆ Locate transit stations at or near major trip generators such as sports venues, concert halls, schools, offices and shopping areas.
- ◆ Provide frequently-used services near transit stations, such as dry cleaners, coffee shops, restaurants and childcare facilities. To encourage patronage of these businesses, place them between vehicle parking areas and the transit stop.



Convenient transfer points between modes of transportation encourage increased transit ridership at the Oceanside Transit Center.

6.1.2 Intermodal Connections

Many transit trips require people to transfer between buses, trains and shuttles. Transit stations should be designed to make these transfers as simple and convenient as possible.

- ◆ Minimize walking distances between different modes of transportation.
- ◆ Allow pedestrians to transfer between modes without crossing major thoroughfares or walking through large parking lots.
- ◆ Group bus stops together into one part of the transit station.
- ◆ Where passengers often transfer between two bus routes, locate the stops for each route close to one another.
- ◆ At transit stations that are near large employers, provide space for commuter shuttles.
- ◆ Incorporate space for taxi queuing where demand warrants.
- ◆ Post clear, easy-to-read signs that provide direction for how to transfer between different transportation modes and transit operators.
- ◆ Provide fare information and timetables at points of transfer, along with maps showing transit routes and connections to other transit services.

6.1.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

Many people arrive at transit stations by walking and biking, and most transit riders will have a short walk to their destination at the end of their trip.

- ◆ Design stations to provide for pedestrian and bicycle access, and plan for improved facilities where needed to support pedestrians and bicyclists.
- ◆ Provide direct, logical paths from the street to passenger waiting areas.
- ◆ Include pedestrian and bicycle connections that link the station to nearby homes, businesses, offices and civic buildings.
- ◆ Post “bike parking” directional signs at entrances to the transit station.

6.1.4 Passenger Waiting Areas

Thoughtfully-designed waiting areas create a more welcoming environment for passengers.

- ◆ Provide aesthetically pleasing bus shelters that offer protection from sun, wind and rain.
- ◆ Post transit schedules and route maps at all waiting areas.
- ◆ Display real-time arrival information for buses and trains if available, and ensure that it can easily be viewed from all waiting areas.
- ◆ Provide adequate, well-lit seating at all waiting areas. For safety, design the waiting area so that passengers can see what is around them at all times.

6.1.5 Vehicle and Bicycle Parking

Adequate bicycle parking must be available at transit stations. Vehicle parking should also be provided, with appropriate policies that encourage people to use local transit service to reach the station.

- ◆ Locate bicycle parking in places with high foot traffic, so that it receives natural surveillance from passersby.
- ◆ Provide secure bicycle parking in the form of bike lockers or “bike stations” with valet parking. Use bike lockers that clearly indicate when they are occupied, so station patrons can see they are being used.
- ◆ Design transit stations to provide for increased bicycle parking in the future as mode share increases.
- ◆ Incorporate an appropriate amount of vehicle parking, using parking structures wherever possible. Manage demand by charging a fee for parking where appropriate.
- ◆ Place surface parking lots in clusters that are large enough to be developed in the future with mixed-use buildings, offices, townhouses, multi-family dwellings or parking structures.

See Also
“Links to Transit”
on page 41



This passenger waiting area in Oceanside includes shelters and plentiful seating.

See Also
Regional Bicycle Plan



Secure bicycle parking in Oceanside encourages people to bike to the transit station.

6.2 Universal Design

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires transit stations to be designed so that anyone can access and use them, regardless of their physical abilities. This requirement ensures that public transit is available to all.



This transit station in Vista has boarding platforms that are suitable for people of all ages and physical abilities.

- ◆ Provide wide, level and smooth paved surfaces in boarding areas. Avoid changes in grade or obstacles that could pose a tripping hazard or interfere with the movement of baby strollers and bicycles.
- ◆ Connect different parts of the station to one another and to the adjacent street with low-slope ramps and wide, flat paths.
- ◆ Where escalators must be used to provide access to part of the transit station, provide an elevator as close to the escalators as possible.
- ◆ Ensure that all seating areas also provide adequate space for people in wheelchairs.

6.3 Signage

All passengers must be able to find information about how to use the transit station and connect to surrounding areas. Signage must meet the needs of frequent transit riders who need to find schedule or route information quickly, as well as new riders who may not be familiar with the station or its surroundings.

- ◆ Design signs with typefaces that are easy to read even in dim lighting.
- ◆ Place signage where it is highly visible and easy to locate for people entering the station, as well as for passengers who are waiting for a train or bus.
- ◆ Provide schedule information and route maps for all routes that use the transit station.
- ◆ Display maps that show the transit system as a whole, as well as local maps of the station that indicate connections between different routes and modes of travel.
- ◆ At bus stops, display schedules that use a clear symbol to indicate when the bus connects to another mode of travel, such as a commuter train.
- ◆ Integrate accessibility features such as Braille signs and audible announcements of upcoming train or bus arrivals.



Low-slope ramps at this transit station in Encinitas provide accessibility for all.



Public art calls attention to this informational sign in San Diego.

