

1999 CPTC ANNUAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6. THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT INSTITUTE STANDARDS FOR BUS STOP MARKINGS THAT WILL LEAD TO THEIR UNIFORMITY THROUGHOUT THE STATE. WE FURTHER RECOMMEND THAT AGGRESSIVE ENFORCEMENT OF SUCH STANDARDS BE PRACTICED WITHIN THE VARIOUS PUBLIC BUS SYSTEMS OF THE STATE.

DEPARTMENT RESPONSE:

We concur wholeheartedly with the Commission's recommendations to improve signage and amenities at bus stops. Our 1996 market research study emphasized that current and potential customers view bus stops as "portals" to the transit system. Where stops are located, how they are identified, what information is available, what other amenities are provided, and how stops are maintained are all-important attributes from the customer's standpoint. Unfortunately, neither CDOT nor CTTransit has control over these decisions. Rather, bus stops are the responsibility of each of the more than 50 towns in which we operate bus service. As a result, there is enormous variation from town to town and route to route – and often along the same route or within the same town – just in terms of bus stop signage, much less amenities and maintenance. For example, in Hartford, we estimate that only about 40% of all bus stops even have a sign of any kind. Another 40% are identified only by a painted stripe on the nearest telephone pole (or as the space across the street from a painted pole for buses operating in the opposite direction), and 20% of stops have no marking at all. Even where bus stops are marked with a sign, it does not necessarily indicate CTTransit's customer service information number, bus route, or schedule information, and of course, the appearance of bus stop signs differs greatly from town to town. The design, quality, maintenance, and location of passenger waiting shelters varies greatly from town to town throughout the CTTransit system, as well as the provision of such incidental amenities as trash receptacles at bus stops.

As noted by the Commission, CTTransit management is working closely with CRCOG to develop a uniform bus stop sign that we hope will then be adopted by all towns in the Hartford region where we operate bus service. We further hope that the eventual success of this project can become a model for similar efforts in other regions. This process will also address the possibility of a regional bus shelter policy and related issues such as shelter maintenance and parking enforcement in bus stops.