

Coordinated Street Furniture | Program Overview

What is Street Furniture?

Street furniture is the term used to describe objects and equipment installed on streets and sidewalks intended for public use. Examples of types of street furniture include transit shelters, litter and recycling receptacles, bus benches, bike racks, enclosures for newspaper boxes, as well as wayfinding signs and structures.

How has Street Furniture been managed in the past?

Metro Transit owns and maintains some transit shelters on sidewalks. Some but not all of these shelters have advertising panels on them.

CBS Outdoor owns and maintains some transit shelters on sidewalks. All of these shelters have some advertising panels on them.

US Bench owns and maintains 'courtesy' benches in Minneapolis. All of the benches have advertising on the seating side of the bench, and some have advertising on the back side as well. Most, but not all, of these benches are located at bus stops and offer a useful amenity to transit riders.



Why is the City considering street furniture at this time?

Current contracts with US Bench and CBS Outdoor expire in 2009. The City expects improvements in the placement, configuration, upkeep and design of street furniture elements on Minneapolis' sidewalks.

The city's intention is to structure a street furniture program that

- a) reduces clutter;
- b) beautifies city streets;
- c) provides functional public amenities with a higher level of service (maintenance and litter collection) and
- d) creates an identifiable image for Minneapolis; and
- e) enhances the current revenues.

The experience of other US and Canadian Cities using a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process among local and national vendors has shown positive results in all of these areas. All of these programs include advertising as the source of revenue that supports the furniture installation, operations, maintenance and replacement; no new costs are expected to be incurred by the City or private property owners as a result of this program. Minneapolis will follow a similar model in selecting a vendor to provide these furniture elements in a coordinated, phased effort.

What is meant by the term 'coordinated'?

Coordinated does not mean identical, but it does suggest the ability to immediately recognize the furniture whatever its setting or context. Street furniture elements around the city should use materials or forms that blend well throughout many diverse city environments and neighborhoods. Some degree of variation or customization (color changes, design details) is welcomed as a way for the furniture to respond to its changing context.

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What furniture elements are being considered for the program?

- Transit Shelters
- Litter/ Recycling Receptacles
- Benches
- Newspaper Corrals
- Wayfinding Structures
- Neighborhood/ District Information Kiosks
- Bicycle Parking Units
- Public Washrooms



Where will the furniture be installed, and what happens to the existing objects?

The program will be city-wide in its reach. Furniture will be located along high transit routes where stops are located today. Neighborhood commercial nodes, major streets, and unique areas such as Uptown, most Downtown neighborhoods, Stadium Village and Dinkytown, Midtown and Hi Lake are all likely places to host street furniture.

Vendors will submit proposals for total numbers of furniture elements. Final locations will be decided in consultation between the City, transit providers, and the vendor, work with local property owner, business association and neighborhood input. Existing furniture will be phased out over time. The new furniture and vendor-provided services are planned for a 20 year contract length, with strict standards for performance and penalties for default.



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Placement and Installation

Street furniture is intended to be located at transit stops or stations, highly traveled pedestrian locations and high density, high activity places in Minneapolis. Many of these places have limited sidewalk space to locate appropriately sized shelters, litter/ recycling receptacles or benches.



The City is defining specific criteria for the placement of various furniture types, based on an area's general land use character, its activity levels and pedestrian needs, the available space on the sidewalk and the ability to maintain a clear path for people passing through the area. These guidelines are described in the City's Coordinated Street Furniture Program Guidelines Report.



Once a contract with a vendor is approved, the vendor will prepare detailed plans for the installation of furniture in the public right of way. The City will review these plans to ensure that the work meets city standards and conforms to a wide range of policies affecting others' use of the right of way. Vendors will be responsible for installation based on approved City documents.

Information Management (signs, schedules, wayfinding)

The vendor will work in partnership with Metro Transit to maintain up to date route signs and schedule information at all locations consistent with system wide standards. Specific details of how coordination will occur are expected to be resolved at time of authorizing a final contract.

Advertising

Advertising on furniture pieces will fund the installation and ongoing maintenance of street furniture; however, advertising will not be allowed to overwhelm the streetscape. Advertising surfaces will be permitted on a limited number of furniture pieces (together forming a cluster) and will be further limited at locations where furniture pieces are likely to be concentrated.



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Maintenance and Upkeep

The vendor will be held accountable for upkeep and service (cleaning, trash removal, snow removal, replacement when damaged) to the furniture they own. The final contract will define the acceptable timeframe for responsiveness to maintenance calls. The contract will include a financial penalty for each incident that vendors do not respond to calls for service within the agreed-to timeframe.

City Role

Once the contract has been established, the City role will be to monitor the vendor's performance, review individual installation plans and issue encroachment permits. The additional revenue required to support this administrative function will be provided by the vendor on an annual basis directly to the City.



Vendor Role

The vendor role will be to install, service and maintain the furniture to the standards defined in the contract. Coordination with Metro Transit to support the timely distribution and posting of transit information is also expected. The vendor will also respond to community for advertising in the right of way.

Metro Transit Role

Metro Transit's role will be to coordinate with the vendor to provide schedule and route information.



Coordinated Street Furniture in Other Cities

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Year of RFP: 2006

Street Furniture Elements Included:

- Bus Shelters
- Trash/Recycling Bins
- Benches
- Multiple Publication Newsracks
- Automatic Public Toilets
- Information/Wayfinding Structures
- Neighborhood Information Structures
- Bike Racks



Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Year of RFP: 2002

Street Furniture Elements Included:

- Bus Shelters
- Benches
- Trash/Recycling Receptacles
- Bike Racks & Lockers
- Multiple Publication Newsracks
- Telephone Booths
- Information Structures
- Automatic Public Toilets
- Wayfinding Structures

New York City, New York

Year of RFP: 2005

Street Furniture Elements Included:

- Bus Shelters
- Newsstands
- Automatic Public Toilets



Coordinated Street Furniture in Other Cities (cont'd)



Boston, Massachusetts

Year of RFP: 2000

Street Furniture Elements Included:

- Bus Shelters
- Automatic Public Toilets
- City Information Panels
- Newsstands
- Telephone Pillars

Chicago, Illinois

Year of RFP: 2000

Street Furniture Elements Included:

- Bus Shelters
- City Information Panels
- Multiple Publication Newsracks
- Newsstands
- Vending Kiosks



What do you Think?

Write your comments on post-it notes and place them on the appropriate photo below:



Future Coordinated Street Furniture

Minneapolis' coordinated street furniture should be designed, installed and maintained to meet important performance criteria. The RFP process has defined these criteria as:

1. Accessible

People of all ages and abilities can use the furniture comfortably, with shelter from wind, rain, snow and sun as appropriate.



2. Placed in the Appropriate Locations

Replacement furniture will be located so that there is an unobstructed path for people using the sidewalk, and that competition for space with existing objects (fire hydrants, light poles) is reduced.



3. Useful

Furniture will be designed serve people, not just to display advertising. Transit information and signs are prominently displayed. Newspaper corrals reduce clutter currently found on the sidewalk. Litter/ recycling receptacles are easy to use.



4. Flexible in Size

Furniture will be designed and installed to accommodate a variety of site conditions and transit boarding areas.



5. Recognizable throughout the City

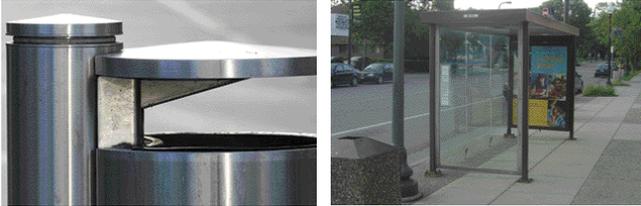
Objects such as transit shelters, litter recycling receptacles, newspaper corrals and signs will be a familiar element of the public realm.



Future Coordinated Street Furniture (cont'd)

6. Durable and easy to maintain

Materials used in the furniture will have a long life, and furniture will be resistant to damage or hard use from a variety of sources.



7. Safe and highly visible

Lighting and transparent materials that allow clear sightlines will be standard features in objects such as shelters. Furniture will be well-maintained to facilitate a sense of safety and care of public spaces.



What do you think? Add your comments here.