

6. ADVERTISING ON BUS SHELTERS POLICY

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Corporate Plan Output: City Design & Heritage Policy	

The purpose of this report is to respond to a request to review the policy relating to Advertising on Bus Shelters.

BACKGROUND

Members will recall that the advertising on bus shelters policy was reviewed last year, resulting in the adoption of a revised policy in November 1999. A report on bus shelters is to be presented to the City Services Committee on 8 August 2000 (see copy [attached](#)).

THE ISSUE

The reason for seeking the amendment is that it is feared that the policy will not allow enough bus shelters to be provided to meet the target of 500 bus shelters (i.e. an extra 225) at the rate of 30-80 per year.

DISCUSSION

In making any decision about changes in the environment a whole raft of opinions and issues must be taken into account, together with an understanding of the implications of the effect one decision now may have on future decisions.

In the case of bus shelters it is very easy to understand the argument for allowing more bus shelters. People say they want them and we have the means of providing them for free, so what's the problem?

The problem is this:

The bus shelters come with advertising panels.

This therefore brings them squarely into the debate about outdoor advertising and under the wing of environmental policy.

The City Plan restricts advertising in residential areas and confines it largely to commercial areas. Advertising is **only allowed in a living zone where it does not detract from amenity values**. Advertising **must be related to the site on which it is situated and there are maximum size limits**. For a living zone this is 0.2m² for sites fronting a local road, 0.5m² for other roads and 1.0m² in a few special circumstances. Advertisement panels on bus shelters are 1.5m² and are not site related.

The control of advertising on bus shelters is by means of bylaws, not through the City Plan. However, it would be expected that the Council would adopt similar procedures and standards as required for private individuals in relation to advertising in residential areas. Each proposal for a bus shelter with an advertising panel should therefore be assessed as if it were a resource consent application.

Concerted efforts are made to limit private advertising in residential areas through the Resource Consent Hearings process. Requests for advertising in these areas are quite common and are generally for illuminated motel signs or floodlit billboards. It will be very difficult to justify refusal of consent for this type of signage when there is an illuminated bus shelter advertisement panel nearby. Once advertising starts to appear in residential areas a precedent is set, the integrity of the City Plan is weakened and there is a real danger that advertising will start to proliferate. Given a target of 500 bus shelters and assuming the majority are at in-bound stops, this equates to one bus shelter at almost every other stop.

Clearly care is needed to ensure that, through the desire to provide more bus shelters, the amenity of our residential areas is not inadvertently harmed. We have to be sure that we are truly providing a facility which will increase bus patronage and not merely creating more advertising structures.

The current policy enables potential sites for advertising bus shelters to be assessed in a manner which takes all issues into account and is consistent with the assessment of applications for advertising from the private sector. The policy has only been in operation for eight months and has not yet been subject to formal monitoring by the Environment Committee.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the current policy continues unchanged at present.
 2. That the policy be monitored after one year of operation, with a record being provided of each bus shelter location assessed.
 3. That further research be conducted into the correlation between bus shelter provision and use of the service.

**Chairman's
Recommendation:** For discussion.