

#9.1

Transportation Report to
SPC on Transportation and Transit
2015 January 21

CITY OF CALGARY
RECEIVED
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER

JAN 26 2015

ITEM: Urgent Business
TT2015-0137
CITY CLERK'S DEPARTMENT

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
TT2015-0137
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TRANSIT SHELTER VANDALISM REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information on actions being taken by Calgary Transit to reduce transit shelter vandalism as requested by Council. Calgary Transit, in partnership with our shelter contractor, Outfront Media, Corporate Security, Calgary Police Service, and Calgary Crime Stoppers, have developed a strategy to address shelter vandalism that focuses on five objectives: (a) prompt vandalism reporting and repair (b) public education (c) prevention (d) identification and response to vandals and (e) focus on "high risk" locations.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the SPC on Transportation and Transit:

1. Recommend that Council receive this report for information; and
2. Forward this report to the 2015 January 26 Regular meeting of Council as an item of Urgent Business.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPC ON TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT, DATED 2015 JANUARY 21:

That Council receive this report for information.

Excerpt from the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the SPC on Transportation and Transit,
Held 2015 January 21:

"APPROVE, Moved by Councillor Chabot, that the Administration Recommendations contained in Report TT2015-0137 be approved, as follows:

That the SPC on Transportation and Transit:

2. Forward this report to the 2015 January 26 Regular Meeting of Council as an item of Urgent Business.

CARRIED"

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

An increase in shelter vandalism prompted a motion (NM2014-28) brought forward by Councillor Chabot in Council on 2014 June 9 directing Administration to "explore using new and existing technologies to mitigate damage to shelters with a high frequency of vandalism and that Administration explore using various means of deterring shelter vandalism including, but not limited to video surveillance and community engagement and report back to Council in 2015 January".

BACKGROUND

There are over 6,000 bus stops in Calgary and of these approximately 1,600 have a transit shelter typically consisting of an aluminum frame and tempered glass walls. These transit shelters are owned and maintained by Outfront Media (formerly CBS Outdoor Canada) as specified by a 15- year agreement (terminates 2018 November). As a condition of this

Approval(s): Logan, Malcolm concurs with this report. Author: McKendrick, Neil
City Clerk's: J. Dubetz

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agreement, Outfront Media has supplied new shelters to replace damaged stock and each year supplies and installs 25 new additional shelters at locations selected by Calgary Transit. In return, Outfront Media sells lighted advertising space at many shelters. In addition to shelter supply and maintenance, Calgary Transit receives a guaranteed minimum annual payment as a share of the advertising revenue. In 2014 the minimum guaranteed payment was \$750,000 and over the life of the agreement the total minimum payment will be \$9.7 million.

Outfront Media is required to ensure that the shelters provide a clean and safe environment and that they are in good repair at all times. This includes the clean up and replacement of broken glass panels. If a shelter is damaged, Outfront Media will remove the debris within 24 hours of notification and will make all reasonable efforts to return the shelter to like new condition within three days. However; some degree of latitude from this time frame is extended based on weather, the nature of the damage and the availability of parts. Outfront Media is responsible for general cleaning of all shelters every two weeks or more frequently at high use locations.

Unfortunately, shelter vandalism has increased during the term of the current agreement and occurrences vary considerably from month to month (Figure 1). From January 2012 to October 2014 over 1,400 glass panels were broken and replaced at a cost to Outfront Media of \$420,000 for cleanup and repairs. Some shelters are damaged repeatedly. In response, a common practice that has been agreed to with Outfront Media is to remove any shelter that has been damaged more than five times in two years. However, this practice is only invoked if there is no other solution as it causes discomfort for transit customers especially during extreme weather.

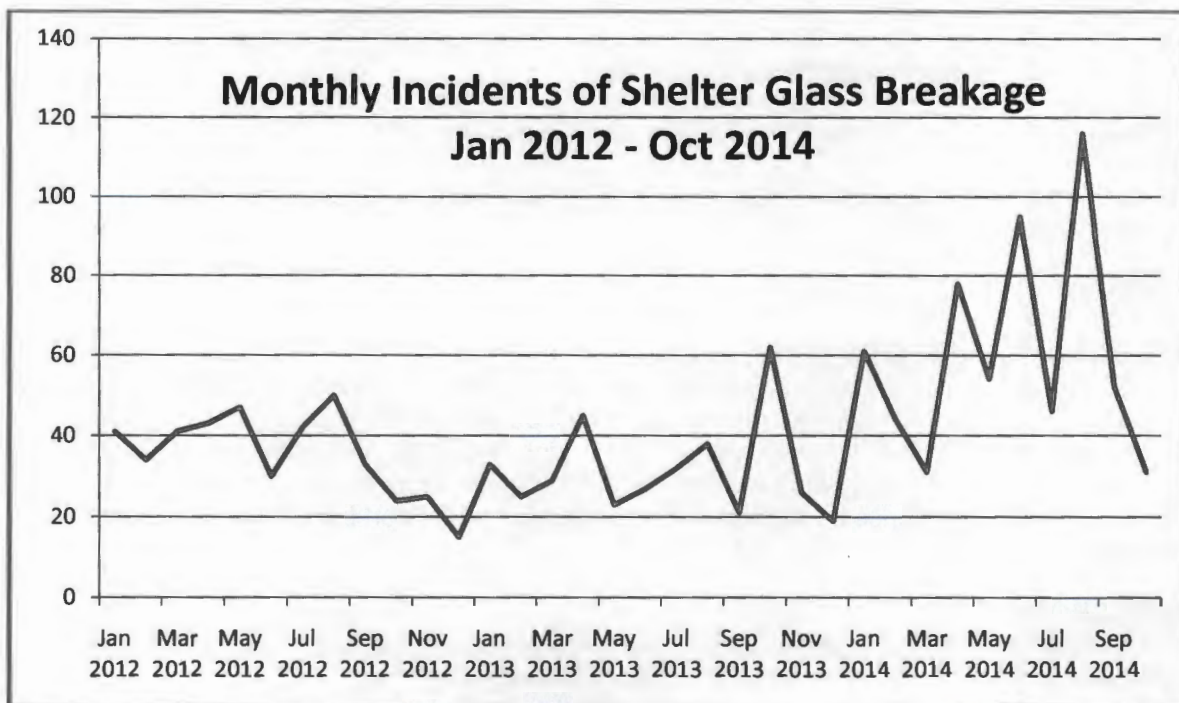


Figure 1

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In the past, transit shelter vandalism has been viewed as a nuisance or considered a low level crime. Incidents have not been reported promptly and offenders are often not apprehended. The recent escalation in shelter vandalism has heightened the level of concern and requires that additional attention be devoted to addressing the issue.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

A strategy with five elements has been developed to address shelter vandalism as outlined below:

A. Improved reporting and repair of damaged shelters

1. Timely repair of damaged shelters

A clean, well-maintained environment conveys a message of caring and good management and acts as a deterrent to further vandalism. Outfront Media is committed to upholding the conditions of their agreement with The City of Calgary for the prompt cleaning and replacement of damaged shelters and replacement of damaged / broken glass, including panels with graffiti. Once reported, Outfront Media is responsible for cleaning the site, removing broken glass and ensuring that the site is safe within 24 hours of receiving a report of damage. The shelter is to be returned to a "like new" condition within three business days.

Calgary Transit is satisfied that the debris associated with broken shelters is being cleaned within 24 hours of damage being reported. However, improvements are needed in the reporting process to address these situations in a timelier manner.

2. Encourage increased reporting of vandalised shelters

A decal (Figure 2) is being installed on all shelters to provide contact telephone numbers for reporting shelter damage. The decal provides a number for Calgary Transit's call centre for damage reports and the Crime Stoppers information line to encourage citizens to provide information about persons who commit vandalism. Additional options to report damage via 311 or email are being pursued. Transit staff are encouraged to report shelter damage when it is observed.

<p>Does this bus shelter need repair?</p> <p>Calgary Transit</p> <p>403-262-1000</p>	<p>Vandalism is a crime.</p> <p>Call Crime Stoppers if you know someone who vandalized a shelter.</p> <p>CRIME STOPPERS</p> <p>1-800-222-8477</p> <p>Anonymous - Cash Rewards</p>
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Figure 2

B. Public Education

Public education is needed to raise awareness about this issue and to assure citizens and transit customers that Calgary Transit and Outfront Media care about this issue. A campaign is needed to ask the public for help in reporting damage and providing information about incidents of vandalism which is a chargeable criminal offence. In early 2015, Calgary

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Transit will work with the Calgary Police Service/Student Resource Officers and Crime Stoppers to engage the active participation of the public, schools and community members. A general anti-shelter vandalism campaign will be developed and implemented in 2015 March.

C. Prevention of Vandalism

1. Vandal resistant materials

Outfront Media continues to investigate the potential use of vandal resistant materials and an alternate shelter design using smaller panels as a means of preventing or reducing vandalism. However, at this point, Outfront Media concludes that tempered glass, generally used world-wide, is the safest, most economical and effective method to enclose a transit shelter so that customers are both protected and visible and that advertising sales can continue to fund these amenities. It was also found that the current design would be expensive to modify to use smaller panels. A summary of these findings is provided in 'Alternative Methods to Enclose Transit Shelters' Attachment 1. Outfront Media remains open to exploring the use of alternate materials in the future.

2. Video Surveillance:

Corporate Security has advised that video surveillance at stand-alone transit shelters is not recommended as a solution to address shelter vandalism for the following reasons:

- a. The required electrical and communications network connections are not available at most locations. The cost of deploying effective video would outweigh the benefits even at high incident locations.
- b. The relatively low frequency and scattered nature of occurrences would require video surveillance at a large number of locations with each having a very low probability of capturing an occurrence.
- c. Multiple, high quality cameras and lighting would be required at each location in order to provide images that would be useful to identify suspects.

It is felt that the other elements of this strategy will be more effective in reducing shelter vandalism; however, the feasibility of video surveillance will continue to be evaluated.

D. Identification and Response to Shelter Vandals

A number of measures are underway to better identify and hold vandals responsible for their actions.

1. Work and gather support from City enforcement agencies to investigate cases where shelters have been vandalised (breakage or graffiti). Calgary Transit's Public Safety and Enforcement Section is part of a Joint Graffiti Investigation Team that includes Animal Bylaw Services and the Calgary Police Service (CPS). Graffiti on shelters is associated with breakage. CPS will investigate incidents, particularly when there are incidents involving multiple shelters, however; they have limited resources to devote when the likelihood of solving the offence is low. A partnership between Calgary Crimestoppers, CPS and Calgary Transit's Public Safety and Enforcement Section is being developed to expand the resources devoted to the identification of suspects, investigate offences and

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initiate prosecution. Active case management will reside with Calgary Transit's Public Safety and Enforcement unit.

2. Work with CPS and Alberta Justice to explore options to strengthen accountability through the use of "extrajudicial measures" as it relates to 'young persons' and 'alternative measures' with respect to adult offenders. Extrajudicial measures may include giving a warning, seeking financial restitution, referrals to a youth justice committee, and community programs or agencies to assist young persons from reoffending. Typically, only cases involving significant damage are prosecuted through the criminal justice system based on broader 'public interest' considerations. There have been past cases where adult offenders have repaid the value of damages.

Calgary Transit is encouraged that there are active investigations for several offenders related to many incidents of shelter graffiti.

E. Awareness and Community Engagement at "High Risk" Locations

In addition to improving general public awareness of this issue, more focused awareness and engagement programs are proposed for communities or areas with a high occurrence of shelter vandalism. Attachment 2 identifies areas within the city that saw a high incidence of shelter vandalism in January to October 2014. The following specific actions are proposed for these high incidence areas beginning in early 2015:

1. Areas of high vandalism will be prioritized and investigated by Calgary Transit Peace Officers in conjunction with CPS.
2. Communities or areas with a high incidence of vandalism will be targeted for engagement which will include meetings with community associations, Business Revitalization Zones (BRZs) and local schools. School information programs will be coordinated between Calgary Transit's School Liaison Supervisor and CPS School Resources Officers.
3. A vandalism awareness poster will be installed in shelters in high incidence areas and the local news media will be alerted.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Communication regarding this issue has involved Calgary Police Service and Animal and Bylaw Services staff. Input has been received from Outfront Media who are, by contract responsible for the maintenance of on-street bus shelters. Community engagement activities will commence in early 2015 to provide information about this issue and to seek support for increased reporting of shelter damage and for the implementation of programs designed to reduce the incidence of shelter vandalism

Strategic Alignment

The Calgary Transportation Plan and RouteAhead contain objectives related to providing a safe, clean and comfortable environment for transit users. Clean and well maintained transit shelters are a key element of providing attractive customer service and for improving community perceptions of safety.

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Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

Social

Damaged shelters can undermine citizen perceptions of community safety, serve as an indicator that crime is prevalent in a neighbourhood and degrade 'quality of life' values. Well maintained transit shelters improve the image of safety and security of the transit system and city as a whole. Opportunities exist to strengthen community ownership of these amenities.

Environmental

A reduction in shelter vandalism will reduce the waste associated with broken or damaged glass panels.

Economic (External)

Well maintained and clean shelters contribute to the perception that an environment is friendly and inviting, therefore supporting businesses, attracting customers and employees and maintaining property values in residential areas. Cost to The City's business partner makes the shelter contract a less attractive business opportunity.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget

Currently, shelter vandalism does not impact Calgary Transit operating expenses. However, a continued high rate of shelter vandalism will have implications for advertising revenue and revenue sharing. A reduction in vandalism will result in cost savings to Outfront Media and increase the opportunity for additional advertising revenue that exceeds agreed minimums for Calgary Transit.

Current and Future Capital Budget

There are no capital budget implications at this time.

Risk Assessment

Not dealing with this issue will erode the image of Calgary Transit and The City of Calgary.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

In response to Council direction, a coordinated and strategic approach involving Outfront Media, Calgary Transit and other City business units is underway to improve reporting of incidents, increase awareness and lower the rate of transit shelter vandalism.

Administration is recommending forwarding this report as urgent business to the 2015 January 26 Regular Meeting of Council in order to meet the time line directed by Council.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Alternative Methods to Enclose Transit Shelters.
2. Shelter Vandalism in Calgary: 2014 January – October.

Alternative Methods to Enclose Transit Shelters



Attention: Tony Tam
Senior Transit Planner
Transit Operational Planning, Calgary Transit
P.O. Box 2100, Stn. M
Calgary, AB
T2P 2M5

Re: Alternative Methods to Enclose Transit Shelters

For more than 30 years OUTFRONT Media, formally CBS Outdoor Canada, has been an industry leader in the transit shelter advertising industry. We continue to build relationships with municipalities across North America and unfortunately vandalism is a common issue when comparing Calgary to any of these various municipalities.

As required within the shelter vandalism plan, Calgary Transit has asked that we explore the feasibility of implementing different measures to reduce opportunities for shelter glass vandalism. Some of these alternative methods include Polycarbonate panels, retrofitting the existing shelters to adapt the use of split glass panels at key locations and the use of security film coatings on glass at certain "high risk" locations throughout the city.

Here is a brief summary related to our findings about each of the more specific items we were asked to explore:

- **Polycarbonate Walls** – This material had been previously used in this and other markets before glass walls became the industry standard. We've found that the material fades with natural sunlight over time, thus turning the clear polymer into a yellowish color. This is certainly not ideal from an advertiser's perspective. In addition this material is flammable giving vandals the opportunity to burn the material causing a major safety concern.
- **Split Glass Panels** – The "Calgary Style" shelters were designed to have full glass panels and have been installed accordingly since the inception of our agreement back in 2003. This shelter design would not be able to incorporate the split glass design, the project would be a major undertaking and the costs involved would be substantial for what we believe would be a minimal cost savings from a maintenance perspective.
- **Security Film** – It is important to stress the fact that vinyl coatings or better known as window security films will not stop glass panels from breaking; rather it is intended to hold, in the case of one of our standard panels of glass, a 30 kilogram broken panel together to eventually fall as one

Alternative Methods to Enclose Transit Shelters



piece as opposed to hundreds of small pieces. Solely from a safety perspective to the general public either sitting inside the shelter or passing by the exterior of a shelter, this is not something we are willing to install even as a test project.

For years, we've met with various transit shelter and street furniture suppliers to explore each and every opportunity to address vandalism concerns and have considered countless options from steel meshing to vinyl coatings on glass walls. When comparing these methods to tempered glass walls, although broken glass might not be pleasing to the eye, tempered glass continues to be by far the safest choice. Glass shelter walls continue to be the most commonly used materials world-wide.

We will continue to explore each and every potential opportunity that comes our way to help curb this ongoing issue.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kyle Donnan".

Kyle Donnan
Real Estate Manager, Alberta
OUTFRONT Media

Shelter Vandalism in Calgary: 2014 January to October

