



Mayor George Sullivan dedicates the new People Mover bus terminal at Sixth Avenue and G Street.

Snow flies as new bus terminal opens

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The central downtown People Mover station opened Monday with flakes of snow falling outside — and inside — the glass enclosure.

Designed to be the main waystation for bus travelers in the municipality, the \$280,000 accommodation center at Sixth Avenue and G Street is now the point of origin for People Mover routes and will supply full information on municipal bus service.

BUT AS AN INTERIM rest stop for passengers, it was planned with exposed structural design and separated panels, allowing the snow to fall through during dedication ceremonies at noon.

Municipal officials responded by saying that a three-foot gap between wall and ceiling should possibly be closed.

"There are some things we need to do to make it more acceptable," said Bruce Nordquist, municipal transit administrative officer. Although pleased with the first day's bus schedules, Nordquist said "bugs" were to be expected in any new building.

HE SAID the shelter was not a "room-temperature enclosure," but was conceived as simple protection from wind, snow and rain. Huge radiant heating elements on the ceiling were installed to help keep the place warm.

It appeared Monday, however, that the new structure was not warm.

Traveler Karla Truby said "it's a good idea and better than being outside, but I would have closed the building in."

"THIS ISN'T Florida," said one critical bus driver. "I don't know who it's trying to serve." He also objected to the expanse of glass, actually a stronger material known as Lexon, which could be subjected to vandalism.

Nordquist, however, explained that the glass provided added safety for women waiting for buses at night, and gave police full visibility in case of any incidents.

He said the center was a "definite addition" to the system, and a plus for bus travelers. Nordquist said corrective action would be done to "take care of what is wrong," altering the heating system and adding some warmth to the building's concrete seats. Perhaps a public address system will be added to inform passengers of bus arrivals and departures.

MEANWHILE, the building offers a variety of informational aids to travelers including an electronic map that gives directions on routes and main points of interest in town.

ONE BUS DRIVER had nothing but praise for the shelter, which "keeps people out of the weather, answers questions and provides better service." The center moves the location of the main downtown station from near the J.C. Penney mall, where businesses complained about travelers interfering with business.

The new building was paid for with \$200,000 from a federal Economic Development Administration grant and \$80,000 from a federal Urban Mass Transit Administration grant.