

# Commercial Activities and Public Spaces at Bus Terminal

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**Abstract:** Bus terminals are not just transit hubs; they are places where people meet, wait, and experience moments of connection. This study highlights how public spaces and commercial activities can transform these often-overlooked spaces into welcoming and vibrant environments. Thoughtfully designed public spaces like shaded seating, green pockets, and cultural installations offer comfort and moments of calm. Complementing these are commercial activities, from local eateries to small shops, which not only cater to traveler's needs but also support the local economy and add a touch of life to the terminals. By blending these elements seamlessly, bus terminals can become more than a stop on a journey they can be places that reflect humanity, culture, and care, turning every trip into a meaningful experience.

**Keywords:** Passenger comfort, Convenience, Bus terminal improvements.

## 1. Introduction

Public spaces are the heart of the terminal open to everyone and designed to make the journey as comfortable as possible. Bus terminals are not just places where people catch a bus; they are vibrant spaces where movement, commerce, and community come together. These terminals, often serving thousands of people daily, have the potential to become more than transit points they can evolve into lively hubs that enhance both the travel experience and the surrounding urban environment.

Bus terminals are bustling places that bring together people from all walks of life, and to function smoothly, they need well-planned spaces that serve different purposes. These spaces can be broadly categorized into public, private, and semi-private areas, each playing a unique role in the terminal's overall design and user experience.

By including shops, restaurants, and other amenities, bus terminals can provide convenience to travelers while supporting local businesses and boosting the economy. Public spaces, like plazas and seating areas, make these terminals more inviting, offering people a place to relax, connect, and feel part of the community. However, the success of these spaces depends on thoughtful design that meets both commercial needs and public expectations.

This study looks at how combining commercial activities and public spaces in bus terminals can create dynamic, people-centered environments. It explores the opportunities and

challenges of making bus terminals functional, welcoming, and truly beneficial for everyone who uses them.

## 2. Hypothesis Research

*A. Q: How do Commercial Activities in Bus Terminals Impact the Overall Experience of Passengers?*

Commercial activities make bus terminals feel more like a space where you can relax instead of just waiting around. Imagine having a long layover—there's a café where you can grab a hot drink, a bookstore to browse, or even a place to charge your phone. For example, if you're stuck waiting for an hour, grabbing a coffee or a snack can make that time fly by. It's about making sure you don't feel like you're just passing time but actually getting something out of it—whether it's a moment of comfort, entertainment, or productivity. It's those little touches that make a huge difference in how passengers feel about the whole experience.

*B. Q: How can Terminals Balance Commercial Activities with the Need for Passengers to Move Easily?*

Balancing commercial activities with passenger flow requires thoughtful design and zoning. For example, a terminal can dedicate certain areas specifically for retail shops or food courts that are away from main traffic paths or boarding gates. This allows passengers to enjoy these amenities without being obstructed on their way to the bus. Zoning can also involve creating multi-level spaces where shopping areas are placed on upper floors or sections that don't interfere with ground-level circulation. Additionally, clear signage and wayfinding systems help passengers easily navigate the terminal, avoiding congestion. The use of modular kiosks and compact vending spaces can help maximize available space without crowding walkways.

*C. Q: How do these Commercial Activities Impact the Satisfaction of Passengers?*

Commercial activities significantly contribute to passenger satisfaction by enhancing convenience and comfort. Passengers appreciate the accessibility of food and drink options, especially during long waits or late-night arrivals. For example, a commuter waiting for a bus at night can feel more secure and comfortable if there's a nearby café or a 24-hour convenience

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store. Retail stores or kiosks offering travel essentials (like chargers, maps, or toiletries) add to the convenience, especially for travelers who may have forgotten something important. Additionally, commercial activities create a more pleasant and less stressful atmosphere. Instead of feeling like a sterile, uncomfortable space, the terminal feels more like a lively, dynamic area that caters to a variety of needs, improving the overall experience for travelers.

### 3. Literature Review

#### A. Public Spaces in Bus Terminal

Public spaces in urban complexes like bus terminals play a key role in fostering community interaction and social connection. According to urban design experts like Jan Gehl, these spaces should not only be functional but also welcoming, offering areas for relaxation and engagement. In bus terminals, features like seating, open plazas, and greenery can transform a busy transit point into a vibrant, human-centered space where people can gather and interact.

#### B. Commercial Activities in Bus Terminal

Commercial elements such as shops and restaurants are essential in enlivening public complexes. In bus terminals, these spaces not only offer convenience to commuters but also contribute to the local economy through increased foot traffic. By providing services and entertainment, these commercial areas help turn bus terminals into lively hubs that attract both travelers and locals, fostering a sense of activity and energy.

#### C. Integration of Commercial and Public Functions

Combining public spaces with commercial activities requires thoughtful design to ensure accessibility and functionality. In bus terminals, this integration means creating pedestrian-friendly layouts that allow for smooth movement while incorporating spaces for rest and socialization. Examples like Marina Bay Sands and Union Station show how blending commercial and public uses can create dynamic, thriving spaces that serve both community and economic needs, making bus terminals more than just transit points but vibrant social spaces.

### 4. Case Studies & Analysis

#### A. Chennai Mofussil Bus Terminal

##### 1) Role of Commercial Activities

###### Convenience for Travelers:

- **Food Outlets:** A range of dining options, from quick bites to full meals, ensures travelers can refuel easily.
- **Convenience Stores:** Well-stocked shops offer travel essentials, snacks, and last-minute purchases.
- **Pharmacies:** On-site drugstores provide access to medicines, first aid, and personal care items.
- **ATMs and Utilities:** Easy access to cash withdrawal and financial services supports seamless travel.
- **Information Kiosks:** Help desks and digital boards guide travelers with schedules, directions, and updates.

##### Revenue Generation:

- **Retail Spaces:** Leasing areas to commercial vendors generates steady revenue while enhancing passenger convenience.
- **Local Business Support:** Allocating stalls to small, local businesses fosters community economic growth.
- **Advertising Opportunities:** Digital screens and billboards in high-traffic zones provide lucrative ad spaces for brands.
- **Event Hosting:** Multipurpose areas can be rented for exhibitions, product launches, or cultural events, boosting income.
- **Premium Services:** Offering pay-per-use lounges, Wi-Fi, and priority boarding zones adds value while increasing revenue.

##### Value Addition:

- **Entertainment Zones:** Gaming areas and interactive displays keep passengers entertained during long waits.
- **Bookstores and Reading Corners:** Travelers can browse or relax with books and magazines, adding a touch of leisure.
- **Cultural Exhibits:** Showcasing local art, history, or crafts enhances the travel experience and connects passengers to the region.
- **Free Wi-Fi and Charging Stations:** Enabling connectivity and device charging adds significant convenience for travelers.
- **Live Performances:** Street performers or scheduled music shows create a lively and memorable atmosphere in the terminal.

##### Catering to Locals:

- **Local Shopping Options:** Offering convenience stores, handicrafts, and specialty shops appeals to nearby residents.
- **Dining Choices:** Affordable food outlets and cafes encourage locals to visit for casual meals or coffee breaks.
- **Community Events:** Hosting markets, exhibitions, or cultural programs turns the terminal into a vibrant community space.
- **Public Utilities:** Facilities like ATMs, pharmacies, and co-working spaces cater to both travelers and local residents.
- **Recreational Areas:** Green pockets, children's play zones, and entertainment kiosks provide leisure options for nearby families.

##### 2) Role of Public Spaces

###### Rest and Relaxation:

- **Shaded Seating:** Comfortable, shaded seating areas provide relief from the sun, making waiting more pleasant for travelers.
- **Ergonomic Benches:** Thoughtfully designed benches offer a supportive place to relax during long waits or layovers.
- **Resting Zones:** Quiet, peaceful corners allow long-

haul travelers to rest without disruption, enhancing comfort.

- *Lounge Areas*: Designated lounge spaces with reclining chairs and charging points cater to those needing a longer rest.
- *Privacy and Comfort*: Separate zones with cozy seating options ensure passengers can unwind in peace while waiting for their buses.

#### *Social Interaction:*

1. *Open Plazas*: Spacious, open areas with seating invite passengers to gather, socialize, and engage with one another.
2. *Landscaped Spaces*: Green, beautifully designed spaces with plants and walkways encourage relaxation and informal socializing.
3. *Public Art Installations*: Sculptures and murals create visually stimulating environments, sparking conversations and connections.
4. *Fountains and Water Features*: Calm water elements offer a peaceful backdrop for people to gather and enjoy the atmosphere.
5. *Performance Spaces*: Designated stages for live music or street performances create opportunities for interaction and cultural exchange.

#### *Green Elements:*

- *Green Pockets*: Small garden areas with trees and shrubs provide refreshing, natural spots for relaxation within the terminal.
- *Vertical Gardens*: Walls of greenery add aesthetic value while improving air quality and creating a serene atmosphere.
- *Sustainable Landscaping*: Eco-friendly planting techniques reduce environmental impact and enhance the terminal's natural beauty.
- *Shade-Providing Trees*: Strategically planted trees offer cool, shaded areas for passengers to rest comfortably.
- *Biodiversity Focus*: Green elements attract local wildlife, enriching the terminal environment with natural life and movement.

#### *Cultural Integration:*

- *Murals and Artwork*: Vibrant murals depicting local history, landmarks, and traditions create a cultural atmosphere for travelers.
- *Sculptures and Installations*: Public art installations showcasing regional craftsmanship or folklore serve as both decorative and educational pieces.
- *Temporary Cultural Exhibits*: Rotating exhibits feature local art, festivals, and traditions, offering a dynamic cultural experience.
- *Architectural Elements*: Design features inspired by local architecture and heritage add a distinct regional identity to the terminal.
- *Cultural Performance Spaces*: Areas dedicated to traditional music, dance, or storytelling provide a platform for live cultural expression.



Fig. 1. Waiting area



Fig. 2. Shops in bus terminal

### *B. Inter State Bus Terminal, Delhi*

#### *1) Role of Commercial Activities*

##### *Affordable Options:*

- *Budget-Friendly Eateries*: Affordable food stalls offering local and fast-food options cater to cost-conscious travelers.
- *Premium Cafes*: High-quality cafes provide a more upscale experience for those seeking comfort and variety.
- *Convenience Stores*: Well-stocked stores offer snacks, beverages, and essentials at reasonable prices.
- *Multi-Tiered Dining Options*: A mix of price ranges ensures accessibility for all types of passengers.
- *Discount Deals*: Promotions and combo offers make meals and essentials even more economical.

##### *Local Flavors:*

1. *Handicraft Shops*: Stalls selling Delhi's traditional crafts, from pottery to textiles, allow travelers to take home unique souvenirs.
2. *Regional Snack Counters*: Vendors offer iconic Delhi treats like chaat, paranthas, and sweets, giving visitors a taste of the city.
3. *Cultural Boutiques*: Stores showcasing local art, jewelry, and decorative items celebrate Delhi's vibrant culture.
4. *Packaged Delicacies*: Pre-packed regional specialties like spice blends and pickles are perfect for on-the-go travelers.

5. *Interactive Displays*: Some shops feature live demonstrations of traditional crafts, enriching the shopping experience.

#### *Entertainment & Utilities:*

1. *Bookstores*: Shelves stocked with novels, magazines, and travel guides keep travelers entertained during their wait.
2. *Pharmacies*: On-site pharmacies ensure access to medicines and basic health supplies for emergencies.
3. *Co-Working Spaces*: Quiet zones with Wi-Fi and charging points cater to professionals needing a workspace.
4. *ATMs and Banking Services*: Convenient cash withdrawal and financial services support travelers' needs.
5. *Entertainment Kiosks*: Music stations, gaming zones, and digital screens offer leisure options for all age groups.

#### 2) *Role of Public Spaces*

##### *Comfort Zones:*

2 travelers can wait comfortably, protected from harsh weather.

- *Family-Friendly Lounges*: Lounges equipped with cozy seating and charging stations create a relaxed environment for families.
- *Children's Play Areas*: Dedicated play zones keep kids entertained, making the wait stress-free for parents.
- *Accessibility Features*: Ramps, clear signage, and accessible seating cater to passengers with special needs.
- *Refreshment Options*: Nearby kiosks and vending machines offer snacks and drinks, enhancing the overall experience.

##### *Green Pockets:*

- *Landscaped Gardens*: Lush, well-maintained gardens add natural beauty and provide a serene space for relaxation.
- *Vertical Greenery*: Walls adorned with living plants enhance air quality and offer a refreshing visual appeal.
- *Potted Plants*: Strategically placed greenery creates a soothing ambiance throughout the terminal.
- *Eco-Friendly Seating Areas*: Benches integrated into green pockets offer travelers a calm spot to unwind.
- *Biodiversity Corners*: Small ecosystems with native plants attract birds and insects, fostering a connection to nature.

##### *Cultural Elements:*

- *Murals*: Vibrant wall art depicting Delhi's history and cultural landmarks enriches the terminal's aesthetic.
- *Sculptures*: Iconic sculptures inspired by Delhi's heritage serve as focal points for travelers to admire.
- *Street Performance Spaces*: Dedicated areas allow local artists to showcase traditional music and dance, creating a lively atmosphere.

- *Heritage Zones*: Themed corners with artifacts and replicas tell stories of Delhi's rich past.
- *Cultural Exhibits*: Rotating displays feature local crafts and traditions, connecting travelers to the city's essence.



Fig. 3. Waiting area



Fig. 4. Shops in bus terminal

## 5. Conclusion

Bus terminals, whether the mofussil hubs connecting towns or Delhi's bustling ISBTs, are more than places where journeys begin or end—they are spaces where life unfolds. With thoughtfully designed public spaces, they can offer more than just functionality: a shaded bench for a tired traveler, a small garden for moments of peace, or a mural that tells the story of the region. These spaces create an environment where people don't just pass through but pause, connect, and belong.

Commercial activities bring vibrancy to these terminals. A steaming cup of chai from a local vendor, a quick snack for the road, or a chance to pick up a handmade keepsake—they turn mundane waiting into moments of delight. By supporting local businesses and offering something for everyone, these activities ensure the terminals pulse with energy and inclusivity.

When public spaces and commercial zones blend seamlessly, bus terminals transform into more than transit points—they become places of warmth, culture, and community, where every traveler feels cared for and every journey feels personal.



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