

## Judge Orders Bus Shelters Be Removed

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TAMPA — Curbside bus stop shelters have been removed from the sidewalks in front of the downtown post office and federal court building by U.S. marshals on the order of U.S. District Judge William Terrell Hodges.

The shelters were removed Sunday, leaving about 3,000 daily bus riders with no protection from the sun and rain and nowhere to sit while waiting except on a short wall between the lawn and the sidewalk and the wide front steps.

The order by Hodges was not challenged by the City of Tampa or the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority but did evoke some calls from angry riders.

HART Executive Director Cliff Hayden said the authority received calls from about 100 angry riders last week.

“They can’t understand what gives the judge the authority to take them down,” he said.

“I just don’t have any comment to make about it,” Hodges said Sunday.

Hayden said a new bus plaza is planned nearby but said it is a year away from being operational.

Hodges issued the order several weeks ago because he said the people massed around the shelters waiting for buses caused intolerable congestion and hampered the coming and going of federal court jurors.