“P+”-signs symbol study
Attempting alternatives

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The 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals, under ‘12. “Parking” sign’ requires signs to indicate available public transport (PT) in word or symbol (e.g. P+Tram), in addition to “P” and “+”.

These signs have a high visual detail density – resulting in large scale depiction for adequate discrimination by drivers on dedicated (large) ’P+-’-signs, which seems the opposite to how they are mostly needed today.
In metropolitan areas, vast amounts of car commuters drive every (working-)day to switch to PT to travel to the city, on roads bearing a high density of signs. Putting up additional (large-scale) ’P+-’-signs – as the Convention suggests – is impossible.

Instead, the meaning of ’P+-’-signs needs to be (and is) incorporated in direction signs. This requires a symbol of low visual detail density (small but still visually discriminable with ease).
This may explain why P+R (Park and Ride) is widely used:

- Low visual detail density (good discriminability)
- Taking advantage of a form of umbrella term – “R”=“Ride”, incorporating all means of local transport (including PT) that avoid or reduce traffic congestion, pollution, high parking costs, stress etc.
- Hence known, due to its catchy and easily pronounceable name, it can be referred to verbally, making it even more popular.
P+-signs: Park and Ride - Discriminability

At same (small) size, P+R maintains legibility best.

A symbol according to the convention will become even more detailed, if several modes of PT are available that would need to be shown.
Attempt to find an alternative to the ‘R’ in ‘P+R’, having the same properties with regard to:

- As low visual detail density
- Able to represent any mode of PT
- Same comprehensibility
P+-signs: alternative to ‘R’ – Considerations

1. AS DISCRIMINABLE AS P+R (Direction Signs) - Concept known from Canadian addition to expect

2a. 'Interchange' No. Corrupting P and +. Symbol has to be addition as vehicle

2b. How to show ride? An idle person not driving


4. Dots: implying continuation (other vehicles, cont. travel)

5a. Person – no discrimination necessary, vehicle need unclear

5b. Person – no discrimination necessary, vehicle need unclear

5c. Idle person sleeping, etc. love for discrimination

5d. Sleeping, etc., love for discrimination

2c. 'Why all this?' Why all this?
P+-signs: alternative to ‘R’ – Considerations

5. ride sleeping person – no discrimination, too abstract.

5b. ride sleeping person – too abstract.

5c. ride sleeping person, no discrimination.

5d. ride sleeping person, no discrimination.

5e. ride sleeping person, no discrimination.

5f. ride sleeping person, no discrimination.

Conclusion:
P+

or only P+
P+-signs: alternative to ‘R’ – Conclusions

a) Simplest found symbol that may stand for “any transport”. Arrow shape indicating onward journey, but may also imply direction in opposition to actual arrow on direction sign.

b) Only ‘P+’ to stand for the concept of any onward ride (symbolised by ‘+’), using existing concept of the Convention.
P+-signs: alternative to ‘R’ – Conclusions

Symbol is (needed to be) generic = hard to learn or interpret.

Might imply misinterpretations: e.g. a certain parking quality standard etc.
P+-signs: alternative to ‘R‘ – Conclusions

Comprehension: By nature, all three variants are generic and ambiguous, if c) wasn’t so widely introduced.

Discrimination: visual detail density in a) & b) is even lower than c’s.

**Recommendation**: Due to results it is unlikely, that P+R can be substituted satisfyingly. Propose to include c) in the Convention as an addition.
Thank you!

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