



Board Report

File #: 2017-0605, File Type: Policy

Agenda Number: 20.

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE JANUARY 17, 2018

SUBJECT: SYSTEMWIDE STATION DESIGN STANDARDS

ACTION: ADOPT SYSTEMWIDE STATION DESIGN STANDARDS POLICY

RECOMMENDATION

ADOPT the Metro Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy.

ISSUE

As Metro expands its transit system, a state-of-the-art systemwide design approach is needed to ensure that existing and future station facilities are safe, smart, clean and green. Adoption of the Systemwide Station Design Policy (Attachment A) will ensure all future Metro Rail and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations follow a consistent, streamlined systemwide design, with integrated public art and sustainable landscaping as variable elements. This policy would take precedence over prior Metro policies regarding architectural design for Metro Rail and BRT station public areas.

DISCUSSION

Background

As the Metro system has expanded over the years, unique station architecture and design features have led to increased long term maintenance challenges with higher costs for the agency. As a result of these unique designs, ordering or stocking of special replacement materials or fabrication of custom features is costly and time intensive. This has also resulted in alterations that are not compatible with original design aesthetics of a particular station or line, and over time has led to the deterioration or loss of these unique designs and features, making some station public areas unsightly. In some cases, station public areas can become unsafe and universal access and efficient transit operations can be adversely affected.

In 2012, following a thorough review and evaluation of other leading state-of-the-art transit systems and international best practices for transit station design, and with an interdepartmental team, Metro developed the Systemwide Station Design using a modular system, or “kit-of-parts”. This kit-of-parts helps to ensure that stations are streamlined and adaptable for varying site conditions, allowing stations to be more cost-effective to design, construct, and maintain.

The Systemwide Station Design Kit-of-Parts

Consisting of high quality, high performance architectural materials and elements, the kit-of-parts can be configured to respond to varying station site conditions, as well as the functional and capacity needs of individual stations. These standardized materials and elements generally consist of low-iron fritted glass panels, stainless steel railings and cladding, architectural grade concrete, and a limited number of factory finished surfaces.

Importantly, while the Systemwide Station Design allows Metro to create a consistent, recognizable architecture, it also provides dedicated areas for elements of variability at each station. Metro's award winning station art program, as well as sustainable landscaping tailored to the county's various microclimates, are elements of variability developed in consultation with and responsive to the surrounding community.

Benefits of the Systemwide Station Design

Metro stations designed in compliance with the Systemwide Station Design Standards will be safer, smarter, cleaner and greener: safer for all riders and operators; intelligently laid out so that stations are easier to access and navigate; simpler and more cost-effective to clean and maintain; and more sustainable in terms of architectural materials, energy usage, and landscaping.

The benefits and advantages of the Systemwide Station Design include:

- Station entrances and public areas that are uncluttered, resulting in safer, more comfortable, and more open spaces;
- Station layouts coordinated with Metro Rail Operations and System Security to ensure visibility through and across stations for transit operators and security personnel;
- Intuitive station layouts to ensure station environments are easier for transit riders to recognize and navigate;
- Locations of station amenities and operational equipment that better accommodate the full range of passengers with various functional limitations as well as those who are highly functional;
- Streamlined integration of lighting, seating, operational equipment, wayfinding, customer information;
- Integration and prominent display of public art;
- A concise palette of durable, high quality materials integrated into station area designs that will be simpler to maintain and are more likely to remain attractive over time;
- Glass canopies and enclosures designed with green sustainable practices in mind to increase natural light access for station interiors and exterior station platforms;
- A modular "kit-of-parts", which will more easily adapt to various site constraints, facilitating the incorporation of new or changing elements and features required by federal, state or local statutes, transit design best practices, and Metro standards; and
- Improved maintainability

Consistency vs. Flexibility

Lessons learned over nearly 30 years of rail design and construction underscore the need for a more consistent and ultimately sustainable approach to station design, construction and maintenance.

That said, consistency does not translate into rigidity. The highly adaptable kit-of-parts, including station entrance plaza design, entrance structure orientation, as well as equipment and amenity configurations, allow for easier integration of adjacent development and first/last mile connections with the station site. As mentioned previously, the modules that make up the Systemwide Station Design kit-of-parts are flexible to accommodate visual connections to the identity and character of the surrounding communities, who are increasingly engaged in the design process. The kit-of-parts creates a framework with which Metro can engage stakeholders to ensure both the quality and safety of station design while being responsive to specific urban design goals and community character, in particular with the variable components of public art and landscaping.

Upon adoption of the policy, all future Metro station design contracts will require that station designs be consistent with the most current Systemwide Station Design Standards. Any accessory station building types not currently included in the Systemwide Station Design Standards are encouraged to use the Metro kit-of-parts materials wherever practicable, and follow similar architectural language as outlined in the current design standards. While not currently required, doing so will help ensure consistency in Metro station branding, improve durability of these facilities, and reduce design, construction and maintenance costs.

The policy also provides that local jurisdictions and other third parties may request, subject to Board approval, design modifications or enhancements to Metro's station design standards for individual stations, contingent on the requestor providing full funding. The policy stipulates that such design modifications and enhancements shall be subject to the provisions of Metro's Supplemental Modifications to Transit Projects Policy, and that third party funding shall cover all related additional design and construction costs, as well as additional operation and maintenance costs for these modifications or enhancements, as required by the Board.

Current Status of Implementation

The Systemwide Station Design Standards were vetted through internal coordination with Metro departments, and implementation of the Systemwide Station Design is well underway. Currently, Metro has 18 stations in either the design or construction phase that are largely compliant with the Systemwide Station Design Standards. The implementation process outlined in the Systemwide Station Design Policy will allow for continual improvement of these standards, through updates to the Metro Rail Design Criteria (MRDC), as appropriate.

Integration with Metro's Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) Program

The adoption of the Systemwide Station Design Policy is part of a host of new and existing policies, programs and processes that together will make up Metro's TOC Program. Over the next six months, staff will work through the Measure M Policy Advisory Council (PAC) to develop a TOC Policy and more clearly define Metro's overall TOC Program. Among other objectives, the TOC Policy will provide direction on eligibility of Metro spending on both TOC activities as well as Local Return funds. The TOC Program will be part of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) process and will provide clarity on the policies, programs and processes that drive Metro's TOC work. Both of these documents will be brought to the Board for consideration and then adoption, in late winter 2017 and summer 2018. The Board can expect to see other portions of the TOC Program rollout prior to spring 2018, including actions to implement various components of the First/Last Mile Program. Going forward, all Board reports and recommendations that relate to the TOC Program will include

reference to such.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

An adopted Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy will help ensure that future Metro stations are safer for transit riders and employees. Stations following these standards will have uncluttered public areas with clear site lines making them safer, more accessible, spacious, and comfortable.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Adoption of the Systemwide Station Design Policy itself has no direct financial impact, as the Systemwide Station Design Standards are already part of the MRDC, Metro Bus Rapid Transit Design Criteria (MBRTDC) and related Architectural Standard/Directive Drawings, and new Metro stations under construction are already complying with most provisions of these standards.

Through implementation of this policy, Metro can expect economies of scale and reduced costs for station maintenance and replacement needs. Currently, unique architectural design and features in station public areas have led to ongoing maintenance challenges and costs. As a result, ordering or stocking of special replacement materials and fabrication of custom features is costly and time intensive. The Systemwide Station Design uses a modular kit-of-parts that is streamlined and adaptable, allowing stations to be more cost-effective to design, construct, and maintain.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board could elect to not adopt the new policy, and rely on the current Metro design standards to guide station design. This is not recommended because although Metro design requirements already include the Systemwide Station Design Standards, Metro often receives requests for customized station architectural styles. Adoption of the policy reinforces Metro's commitment to a consistent, integrated systemwide design approach and the creation of a safer, smarter, cleaner and greener transit system.

NEXT STEPS

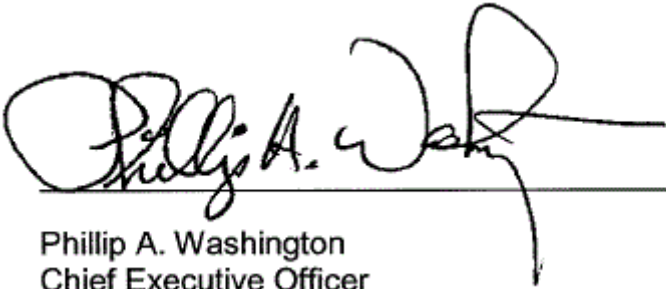
With Board approval, the policy will help ensure that all future Metro Rail and BRT stations, as well as renovations of existing stations where appropriate, are consistent with the Systemwide Station Design Standards as contained in the MRDC, MBRTDC and related Architectural Standard/Directive Drawings.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Metro Systemwide Station Design Standards Policy

Prepared by: Rachelle Andrews, Principal Transportation Planner, (213) 922-3896
Adam Light, Senior Director, (213) 922-6926
Nick Saponara, Deputy Executive Officer, (213) 922-4313
Jenna Hornstock, Executive Officer, (213) 922-7437

Reviewed by: Therese W. McMillian, Chief Planning Officer, (213) 922-7077



Phillip A. Washington
Chief Executive Officer