



## Legislation Text

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Staff Report for a Resolution Approving \$49,500 to Fund Design and Fabrication Costs for the Enhanced Artistic Treatment of an Additional East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Station (BRT Station) in the City of San Leandro

### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

AC Transit followed a comprehensive process working with artists and the community to develop artistically enhanced BRT stations. AC Transit allocated \$1.5 million for art to fund color, text and graphics for all stations. Funding was also identified for additional artistic enhancements at select stations. Based on the percentage of stations in San Leandro, funding is available for one enhanced station. The City has the option to enhance additional stations at a cost of \$49,500 per station. Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to expend \$49,500 from the General Fund Reserves to artistically enhance both the Georgia Way and the Downtown San Leandro stations.

### BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

The East Bay Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line to be implemented by AC Transit will operate from Uptown Oakland (19th Street BART Station) to the Downtown San Leandro BART station. Of the 34 stops, the following five are in San Leandro:

- Durant Avenue - East 14th Street & Durant (1 median station)
- Georgia Way - East 14th Street & Georgia Way (2 curbside stations)
- San Leandro Civic Center - East 14th Street & Haas Avenue (2 curbside stations)
- Downtown San Leandro - Davis Street & Hays Street (2 curbside stations)
- San Leandro BART (1 single platform)

AC Transit has provided updates to the City Council numerous times on the BRT project. This report deals specifically with the artistic enhancements planned for the stations. AC Transit developed an Artistic Enhancement Strategy for integrating artistic enhancements. AC Transit allocated \$1.5 million towards this initiative. AC Transit's public art consultant met with City staff, community arts leaders, and others and presented preliminary recommendations on the selection and development process to the San Leandro City Council in December 2012.

The Artistic Enhancement Consultant Team in consultation with AC Transit made several recommendations to ensure artistic treatment throughout all stations on the BRT Corridor - a limited artistic treatment for each standard station and a greater artistic treatment for enhanced stations. The choice of enhanced stations was based on a variety of factors including anticipated ridership levels, linkages to important destinations and proximity to proposed development.

AC Transit followed a comprehensive and inclusive process to design artistically enhanced BRT

stations. AC Transit issued an RFQ for Lead Artist or team and an RFQ for Supporting Artist in October, 2013. A BRT Artist Team was selected following a national search. Representatives from San Leandro served on the advisory committee to recommend the semifinalists, and also on the Artist Selection Panel to recommend a finalist to the AC Transit Board, which approved the recommendation in April 2014. The team is comprised of four nationally distinguished and experienced public artists: Johanna Poethig, Mildred Howard, Joyce Hsu and Peter Richards. The team visited neighborhoods, businesses, and community centers along the Corridor and documented its findings through photos, research, mapping exercises, and text descriptions.

In Summer 2014, AC Transit invited the community to meet the Artist Team to learn about their previous experience as public artists who work with communities on large-scale and complex projects. The Artist Team also engaged the communities along the BRT corridor in interactive sessions. A community meeting was held at San Leandro City Hall. Residents, merchants, and transit riders viewed a visual presentation of the artists' work followed by an interactive mapping exercise during which participants completed questionnaires about the community. From these sessions, along with library and other research, the Artist Team gleaned valuable knowledge about the distinctive physical and social community patterns associated with the neighborhoods along the corridor.

In addition, Youth Focus Workshops with young people ages 15-22 were held with one of these meetings occurring in San Leandro in partnership with the San Leandro Main Library. The youth were excited to learn about the new BRT and to play a role in helping the Artist Team learn more about the community from their perspective and to evolve the artistic concept. Together the community meetings and Youth Focus Groups and the input from the stakeholders (City of Oakland and City of San Leandro) served to guide and inspire the development of the Artist Team's refined artistic enhancement approach.

A Corridor-Wide Approach was used to integrate the artistic enhancements for each station with the station architecture and to create a transit corridor for thousands of people to "flow" along on one of the longest continuous streets in the Bay Area. The overall theme for artistic enhancement is Cultural Corridor/Urban Flow, establishing multiple points of connection and ways in which transit riders and the public can relate to the BRT Corridor as they move through the surrounding neighborhoods. From this overall theme evolved the concept of utilizing four overlapping artistic elements that, when combined, reflect the overall Cultural Corridor/Urban Flow theme, distinguish clusters of stations through a neighborhood theme, and identify each platform as unique in the sequence of stations. The four artistic design elements are: color, icon (historic or contemporary), a "ribbon of text" and a flow line (the visual placement of each element in a station's artistic design).

"Ribbon of text" is a significant element of the design and consists of poem-like original text that will connect all stations along the corridor. This text is intended to resonate with the community and would be a key element of the Artist Team's Corridor-wide approach. A "flow line" is drawn from local creek, lake and coastal maps and integrated with the iconic and text elements mentioned above, unfolding in a color scheme that reflects the surroundings and identifies the various groupings of stations. The text that will be included on San Leandro's five stations follows:

cherry songs and blossoms  
bouquets like promises/dahlias open to city air  
wishes enveloped red  
rails sing/ through wired airways

shimmering/ our hellos  
sidewalk strollers/ in urban flow  
gather together/ we dream  
pathways to other worlds

All BRT stations will receive some gesture of artistic enhancement - either "standard" or in some cases "enhanced". The standard enhancements will be on the handrail panels. See Attachment 1, Figure A, for an example of what is planned for the handrails of the North bound Georgia Way station.

An enhanced station includes artistic elements on the windscreen in addition to the handrails. See Attachment 1, Figure B, for an example of what has been designed for the Georgia Way station.

Based on the number of stations in San Leandro, the City was allocated one enhanced station. Staff recommends enhancing two stations - the Georgia Way station and the Downtown San Leandro station based upon the prominence of these locations. AC Transit has agreed to enhance two stations if San Leandro pays for the additional costs associated with the second station. The costs of the additional windscreens for the two platforms are as follows:

Artist Design, Services & Management Fee	\$15,000
Screen Fabrication	45,364
Contingency	1,000
Credit for cost of standard screen	(11,894)
Additional Cost of Enhanced Screen	\$49,470

### **Fiscal Impacts & Budget Authority**

This General Fund program will cost \$49,500. The City Manager's Contingency Fund (Account 010-14-015) in the FY 2014-15 Budget is to be increased by \$49,500 to be funded from the Economic Uncertainty Reserve.

### **ATTACHMENT**

- Attachment 1: BRT Design Features for Georgia Way Station

**PREPARED BY:** Cynthia Battenberg, Community Development Director