PROJECT CASE STUDY / TRANSIT · ARCHITECTURAL METAL

Downtown Station Platform Modifications

Downtown San Diego · SANDAG & San Diego MTS
Trolley Renewal Project · Prime Contractor: HMS Construction



Finished platform railing running the length of the downtown station, with the MTS passenger information kiosk — architectural grating infill, dark finish, street-level exposure.

OWNER
SANDAG & San Diego MTS

PROGRAM
Trolley Renewal Project — $660 million

PRIME CONTRACTOR
HMS Construction, Inc.

IN-LINE ROLE
Custom handrail & metal fabrication

SUBCONTRACT
Executed May 2012

CONTRACT
SANDAG CIP 1210070.3

THE PROJECT

The Trolley Renewal Project was a $660 million rebuild of San Diego's Blue and Orange Lines — new low-floor vehicles, eleven renovated Blue Line stations, new platforms, track, switches and overhead wire. Downtown, the platforms had to be modified to meet the new low-floor cars.

Lowering a platform is not just concrete. Every edge, every ramp, every separation between the public and the trackway has to be rebuilt around the new geometry — and downtown, it has to look like it belongs on a city street rather than in a rail yard.

In-Line held the custom handrail and metal fabrication scope under HMS Construction.

WHY IT WAS HARD

Architectural grating, not standard fence

The design called for architectural bar-grating infill panels — a European specification with fine vertical bars set in a welded frame, chosen for how it reads at street level and how it screens without closing off the view. In-Line fabricated the panels, the posts and the rail assemblies to the platform geometry.

A coating problem In-Line raised before it became a failure

During fabrication In-Line found that hot-dip galvanizing was not holding on the sharp edges of the bar stock, and that the specified paint system was going to be applied over that compromised coating. Rather than install it and let the finish fail in a year on a downtown street, In-Line documented the condition with photographs and put the question to the contractor in writing before a single panel went in.

That is an uncomfortable message to send on a public works job. It is also exactly the message an owner needs before the coating warranty starts running.

Working in the middle of a live downtown

These platforms sit on city sidewalks between office towers, with pedestrians, traffic, and trolleys running throughout. There is no laydown yard on Broadway. Material arrived staged and sequenced, and the work happened around a street that never closed.

WHAT IN-LINE DELIVERED

- **Custom platform handrail and guardrail systems** — fabricated to the modified platform geometry required by the low-floor conversion.
- **Architectural grating fence panels** — bar-grating infill in fabricated frames, finished for street-level exposure.
- **Passenger information kiosk structures** — the fabricated frames carrying MTS timetable, route map and rider information displays.
- **Shop drawings, fabrication and finish coordination** — including raising the galvanizing and coating conflict in writing before installation.

SCOPE AT A GLANCE

Custom platform handrail | Architectural grating panels | Guardrail systems | Information kiosk structures | Shop drawings & fabrication | Galvanizing & coating

THE RESULT

The Trolley Renewal finished in 2015. Low-floor cars now serve the whole system, and the downtown platforms In-Line built the metal for are used by tens of thousands of riders a day — the railing they lean on waiting for a trolley, and the kiosk they read to find out when it comes.

Anyone can fabricate to a drawing. The subcontractor worth having is the one who tells you the coating is going to fail before he installs it, not after.

WHY TRANSIT PRIMES CALL IN-LINE

In-Line has been building fence, railing and architectural metal into San Diego's transit system for over a decade — the Trolley Renewal downtown platforms in 2012, Poinsettia Station in 2018, and the Mid-Coast Trolley extension through 2022.

- **We run our own shop.** Custom handrail, architectural grating, kiosk structures — drawn, fabricated and finished in house, not bought from a catalogue.
- **We tell you what we find.** Coating conflicts, detail clashes, constructability problems — raised in writing before installation, when they are still cheap to solve.
- **We work live corridors and live streets.** Downtown sidewalks, platform edges, active trackway — sequenced around the public, not the other way around.
- **We are certified, bonded, signatory, and safe.** DBE · SBE · SLBE · SB · HUBZone · SBA 8(a). Union affiliated, Local 89 & Local 12. CSLB C-13, C-51, C-32. Bonded through Old Republic Surety, rated A+ XV. **EMR 0.68.**

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In-Line Fence & Railing has built fence, railing, and guardrail for Southern California public works, utilities, school districts, and government agencies since 1990.

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