

Design of Metro

January 15, 2009
Akron, Ohio

The overall layout of the METRO RTA Intermodal Transit Facility was largely dictated by the shape of the site and the requirement to accommodate 52 buses on site. Because of the linear plan form which responded to the numerous bus berths, the dominant architectural feature of the facility is the two long canopies which cover the front ends of the buses. Located in the center of the plan is the main hub of the facility, housing the customer service and facility management functions of both METRO RTA and Greyhound.

Because of security and visibility concerns, the main building was conceived of as being a large glass box housing the public lobby and customer service areas but which permits views from within and out. This transparent main form is penetrated by some more solid forms housing the more private operational spaces. Shading of the large expanse of glass is facilitated by the large sweeping roof overhangs which are suspended in part by structural steel supported off cast-in-place concrete columns. Both the canopies and the main roof are edged in composite metal panels which provide a sleek appearance from passing traffic which is further enhanced by linear metal ceilings which provide a clean surface to reflect at night indirect light from the column-mounted light fixtures. The forms which penetrate the glass are sheathed in ribbed stainless steel panels for durability and ease of maintenance while the three vestibules are clad in red composite metal panels, defining the entrances and providing a splash of color on the exterior.

On the interior of the building, the exposed walls are of the same stainless steel metal panels to provide continuity of the architectural forms while the use of color is primarily restricted to the epoxy terrazzo floor emulating the METRO RTA corporate identity colors of red, lilac and white.

Sustainability is a prominent feature of the design of the building which has a goal of LEED Gold certification. Not only has recycled content been specified in many of the materials selected for the building but the main roof is covered by photovoltaic solar panels which generate electricity, there is a geothermal heating and cooling system, waterless urinals and a rainwater-harvesting system which will provide water for flushing toilets and irrigation of the landscaped areas of the site.

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