

Purpose

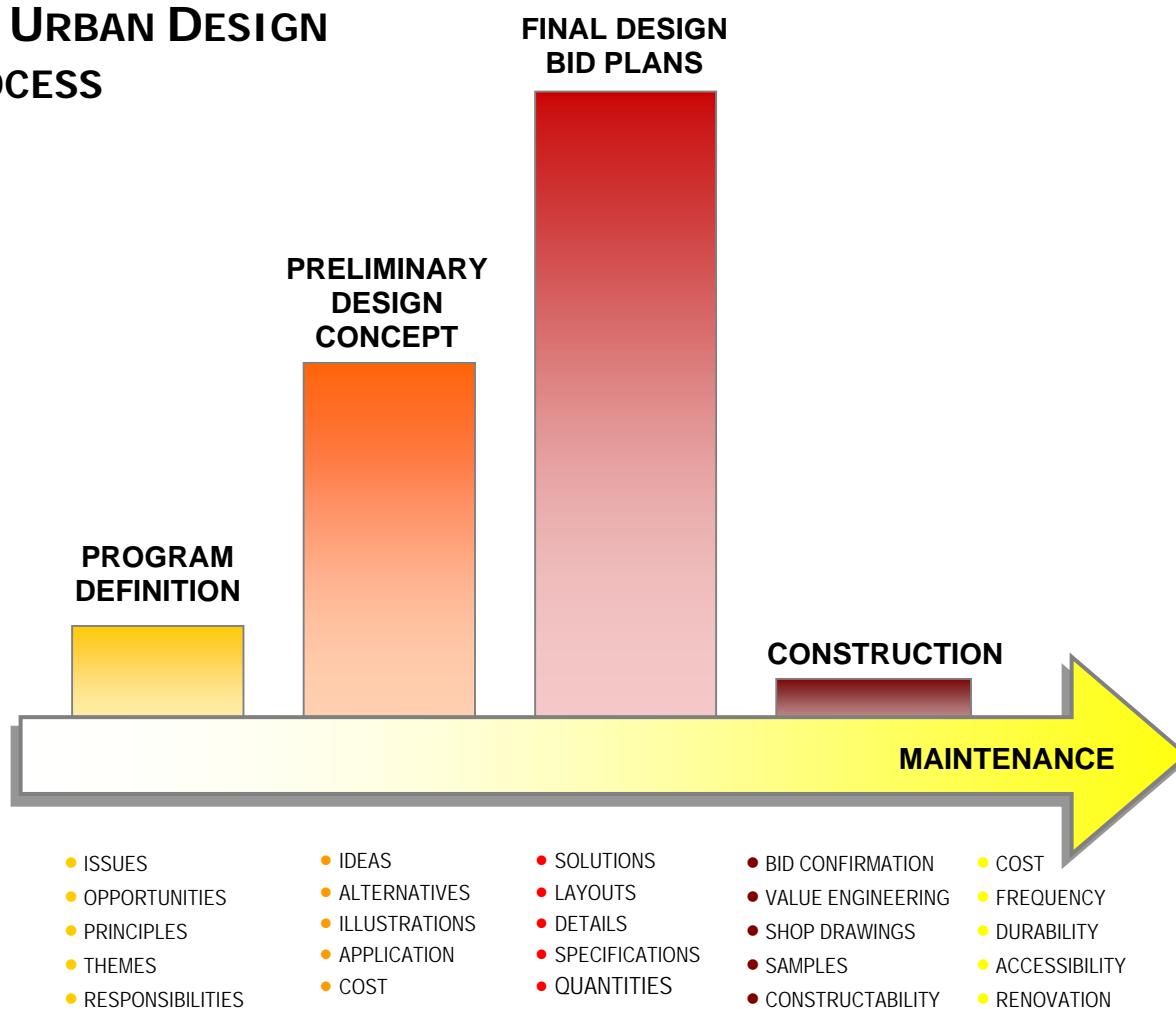
PURPOSE

The Conceptual Urban Design Study is an integral part of Project Pegasus. Along with improving the safety and capacity of Dallas' downtown freeways, Project Pegasus seeks to enhance the transportation corridor environment, for motorists, adjacent property owners, and neighborhoods through a context sensitive Urban Design strategy. Unlike past approaches where transportation facilities were constructed with thought for only for the speed and safety of the traveling public, planners and designers now seek to make highways and bridges serve as integral design elements in the urban fabric.

This phase of the Urban Design process for Project Pegasus involves an ongoing public dialogue of "what-if" design items, which may be considered for implementation and/or future community cost-sharing. Elements could include distinctive signage and illumination, public art, landscaping, specialty pavement, textured retaining walls and vertical surfaces, community gateways, and specialty designs incorporated into bridges, column supports, and other features. While these considerations are not new to transportation projects, their role in the planning process is changing. Too often, Urban Design has been performed as an "add on" at the last minute, limiting full-potential design opportunities and the funding to pay for them.

With Project Pegasus, TxDOT and the project team have had stakeholders involved from the outset so that there is time to plan, build consensus for decisions, and incorporate the selected elements into multi-year funding streams. The Urban Design strategy for Project Pegasus may not be fully defined in the immediate future, but the process of incorporating Urban Design in the early planning phase of the freeway redesign has provided an opportunity for Urban Design to be a more proactive part of the process. For Urban Design to be successful, it should continue to be an integral aspect of all future development phases of the project.

THE URBAN DESIGN PROCESS



At this early stage in project development (Program Definition), certain Urban Design concepts are presented to the reader, observer, or inquirer as design opportunities. When subsequent phases of the project occur, it will be essential to determine which elements will be implemented, and resolve the details of how they will be accomplished. All of the preliminary concepts will require additional study to determine their final characteristics. Future decisions will be based on cost determinations, design refinement, and technical coordination, which should occur prior to final engineering plan development. As a starting point toward these decisions, the Urban Design completed to date provides a conceptual framework and preliminary direction for future design phases. These concepts are intended to serve as broad themes for the project as well as specific "champion-candidate" strategies at locations throughout the corridors.

