

To: Mayor Andre Dickens and CEO Collie Greenwood  
From: Councilmember Amir Farokhi and Councilmember Jason Dozier  
Date: 3/1/2023  
Re: MARTA Five Points Redesign

Mayor Dickens and CEO Greenwood, we are writing you out of an abundance of concern surrounding MARTA's transformational investment in the Five Points MARTA Station. The station has not seen significant upgrades in the last 50 years, and--as the hub of our heavy rail system--we believe it is deserving of a world class plan. A significant investment in a transformed Five Points Station has the ability to serve as a neighborhood anchor for the substantial development planned for the surrounding development projects (e.g. Centennial Yards, Underground Atlanta, Newport-South Downtown, and 2 Peachtree), for events like the World Cup and the Super Bowl, and beyond. Unfortunately, we believe that the design that MARTA is currently circulating with the City of Atlanta and stakeholders will not deliver on the the long-promised improvement to the station.

MARTA's current design (9A) contemplates removing the concrete canopy, replacing it with a glass entrance and a new plaza with a mix of uses. This proposed approach to programming the plaza and removing the brutalist top is welcome. However, the concept also abandons the original City of Atlanta vision by prioritizing on-street bus access instead. The design has seven on-street bus bays (four on Alabama Street and three on Forsyth Street). These on-street bus bays threaten the overall vibrancy and pedestrian-orientation of the area. Crossing between the planned Summerhill BRT and the Five Points Station or traveling between planned developments will involve walking through a physical barrier of idling buses.

Downtown stakeholders have repeatedly communicated the desire for a pedestrian-oriented station with buses either internal to MARTA's existing property or on an adjacent parcel. The current design ignores this repeated request, jeopardizing street access that should otherwise be used for safe pedestrian and cycling activity. And while some Downtown stakeholders have continued to provide feedback without any recognition in the design process, the public has yet to be substantively consulted on the station redesign. In addition, MARTA continues to plan for a big expansive plaza at Five Points with no apparent plan for ongoing management and maintenance, which is a big issue with the station today.

We recognize the urgency of the impending World Cup; however, we ask MARTA and the City of Atlanta to design a station for the next 50 years rather than focusing on a short term effort resulting in a sub-par design. Additionally, we worry that the current design will be approved for expediency's sake only to hit snags in engineering and construction, ultimately rendering it inoperable during the World Cup - a brief 32 months from now. Smaller scale, cheaper investments can be made in Five Points in the short-term while appropriate design and engineering is done to create a transformed station that prioritizes livability. In the end, any design advanced should include a long-term, achievable plan for funding operations and maintenance on the station and proposed plazas.

We look forward to working together with you, stakeholders, and the public to advance Five Points into a world-class station.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Amir'.

Councilmember Amir Farokhi  
District 2, Atlanta City Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Jason Dozier'.

Councilmember Jason Dozier  
District 4, Atlanta City Council