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March 7, 2023

Collie Greenwood
Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA)
2424 Piedmont Road
Atlanta, Georgia 30324

Re: MARTA Five Points Redesign

Dear Collie,

We are more than eager to see an investment in the Five Points MARTA Station. As the hub of the system, Five Points Station is in desperate need of an upgrade to support the system's growth and the rapidly evolving neighborhood of South Downtown. There seems to have been a flurry of meetings in recent days regarding a new plan for the station. Some of those meetings we were in attendance, some we were not. The purpose of this letter is to make our position clear; we are not supportive of the design that is currently being circulated (9A). We concur that the plan for station canopy and plaza is aspirational and inspiring, but we question the risk of spending \$260 million, and not getting it right for everyone who has a stake in its success.

We understand that the design is being driven by the World Cup deadline; however, planning a station for a one-time event rather than the future of the City's core is misguided, particularly since transportation plans for the World Cup are not yet known. Beyond planning, the construction schedule is an enormous risk—if delays occur, the hub of the system could be closed during the World Cup. As you work to design and build an improved Five Points Station, we ask for the following:

1. A Commitment to Maintain the Existing Station

Acknowledging and appreciating the work being done on the platform level, small investments in the mezzanine and plaza level can make a large impact for the World Cup. Similarly, Vine City, Garnett, and Georgia World Congress Center (GWCC) stations all require much-needed attention before the World Cup, as they will also carry a substantial number of event attendees. MARTA should commit to the existing stations and plazas rather than waiting for the creation of a new one.

2. Extensive Engagement

The final plan for the station was first shown to Downtown stakeholders on Friday, February 24th. At that time, no alternatives were offered. Additionally, that plan had not been circulated to the relevant Council Members or members of the public. Before spending \$260 million, proper engagement must be done with the public, stakeholders, and elected officials.

3. A Plan for Operations & Maintenance

The proposed design contains extensive plaza space for programming. To date, no clear commitment has been made to operating and maintaining this plaza. Yet, the operations and maintenance of the plaza are integral to the success of the design. A commitment must be made to properly fund operations and maintenance in the long-term before a design can be adopted.

4. Data-Based Rationale for the Design

The current design includes eight on-street bus bays, creating a pedestrian fortress around the station on Alabama Street and Forsyth Street. When asked about the justification for the number of bus bays (i.e. historic, current and future ridership and bus routing), none has been produced as the data and future routing of buses is dependent on the long-delayed bus network redesign. Seeing as the planning process for the station has revolved around bus accommodation, the bus network redesign should be completed before finalizing this design.

5. A Public Cost Estimate

The current design is an enormous investment. The full cost estimate should be released before moving forward on a new design.

We look forward to engaging in more detailed and transparent conversations around this important and needed system upgrade.



A.J. Robinson
President
Central Atlanta Progress/Atlanta Downtown Improvement District

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Mayor Andre Dickens
Councilman Jason Dozier
Councilman Amir Farokhi
Councilman Doug Shipman
Courtney English, Senior Policy Advisor, City of Atlanta
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Theo Pace, Deputy Chief of Staff, City of Atlanta
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Rod Mullis, MARTA Board of Directors
Jennifer Ide, MARTA Board of Directors
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