



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY

EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

MEETING SUMMARY

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Committee Chair Sagirah Jones called the meeting to order at 11:34 A.M.

Board Members

Present:

Al Pond
Freda Hardage
Roderick Frierson
Valencia Williamson
Jennifer Ide
Sagirah Jones
Sarah Galica
Elizabeth Bolton-Harris
Shayna Pollock
DeVon Hudson

Board Members

Absent:

Kathryn Powers
Jacob Tzegaegbe
Russell McMurry
Jannine Miller
Ryan Loke

Staff Members Present:

Jonathan Hunt
Rhonda Allen
Paul Lopes
Ralph McKinney
Steven Parker
Duane Pritchett
Michael Kreher

Also in Attendance: Peter Crofton, Phyllis Bryant, Chinnette Cannida, Stephany Fisher, Kenya Hammond, Leslie Hubble, Tyrene Huff, Jennifer Larosa, Jacqueline Holland and Paula Nash

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Minutes from January 22, 2026 External Relations Committee meeting

Approval of the Minutes from January 22, 2026, External Relations Committee meeting. On a motion by Board Member Hardage, seconded by Board Member Galica, the motion passed by a vote of 10 to 0 with 10 members present.

3. BRIEFING

Government Affairs Community Engagement and Legislative Update

Sr. Director, Government and Community Affairs, Jennifer Larosa presented an update of MARTA's public engagement and legislative agenda progression.

Marketing Update: Big 6 in 2026

Sr. Director, Marketing and Sales, Chinnette Cannida presented a briefing of the Office of Marketing and Sales' strategy to support MARTA's six major initiatives in 2026, including the NextGen Bus Network, MARTA Reach, Breeze open fare payment, the CQ400 rail car rollout, the Rapid A-Line Bus Rapid Transit service, and preparations for the FIFA World Cup. The presentation highlights how coordinated marketing and communications efforts will increase public awareness, support rider education, and encourage adoption of these new services and system improvements.

Media Impressions Nov. 2025 - Feb. 2026 and Big 6 Communications

Sr. Director, Communications, Stephany Fisher provide the committee with an overview of the November 2025 - February 2026 Media Impressions MARTA's Big 6 Communications Initiative.

4. OTHER MATTERS

February 2026 Government Affairs Community Engagement and Legislative Update presentation (for information only)

5. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee meeting adjourned at 12:06 P.M.

YouTube link: <https://youtube.com/live/yYpclGWP-Dw?feature=share>

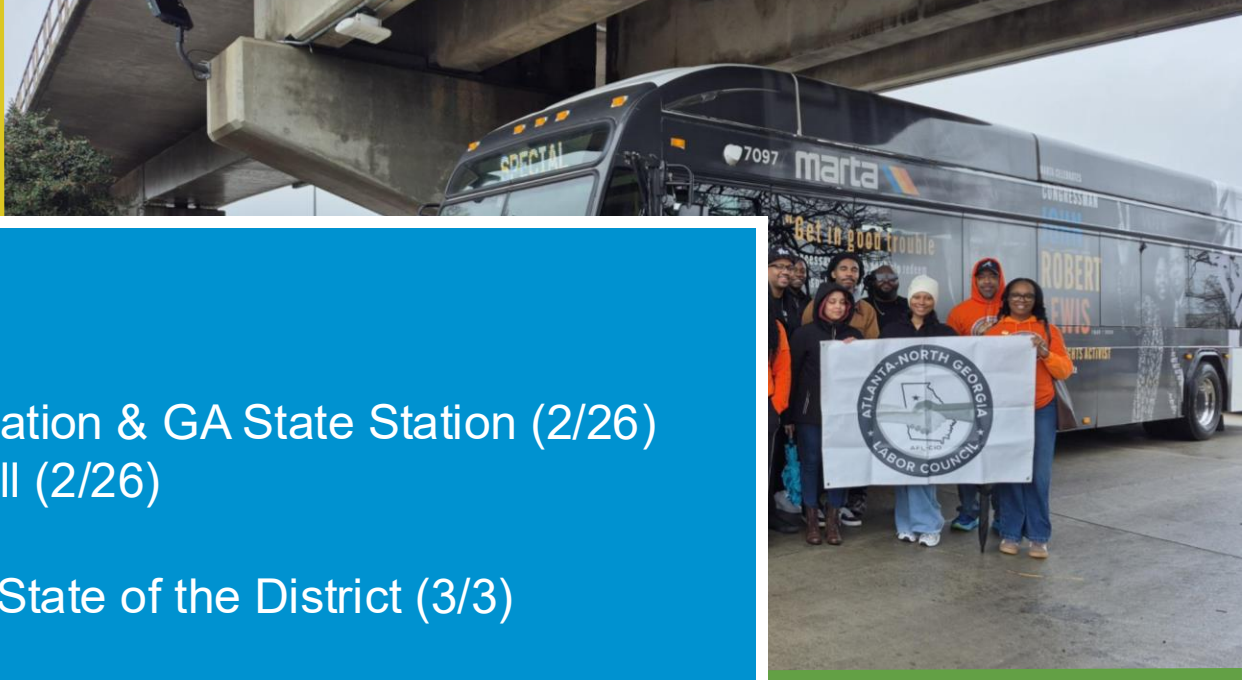


External Relations Board Update

Jennifer Larosa, Sr. Director Government & Community Affairs

March 26, 2026

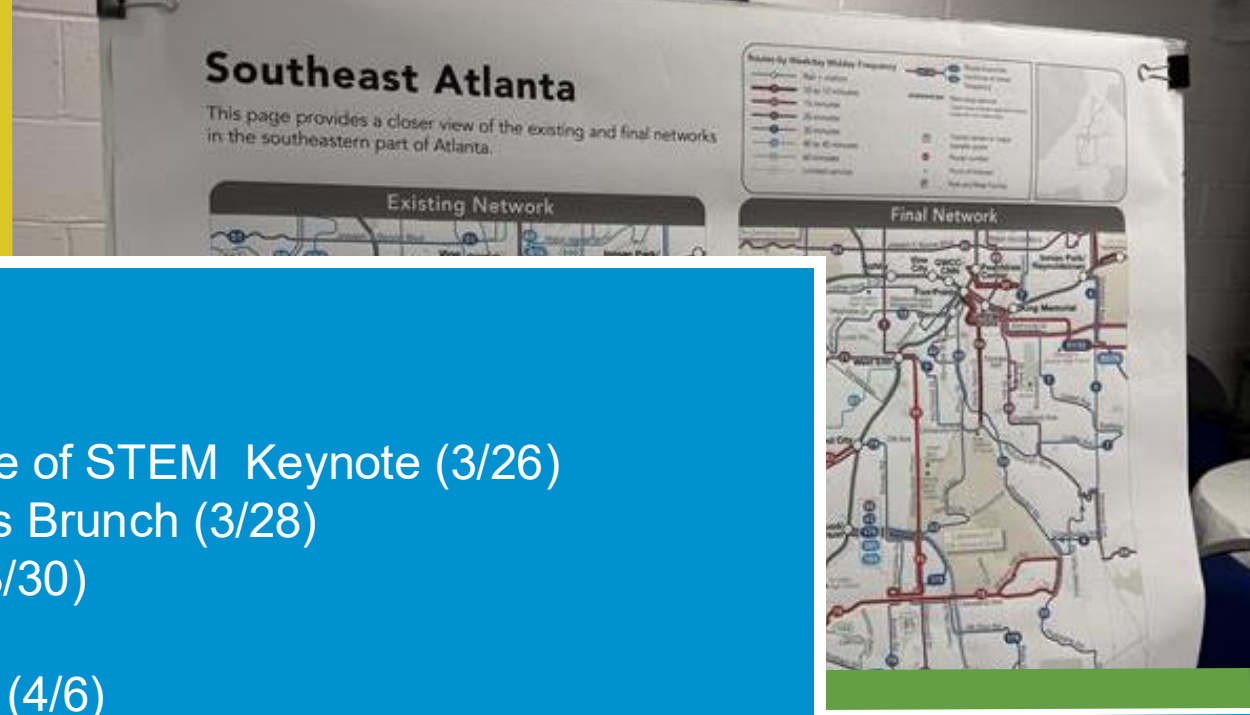
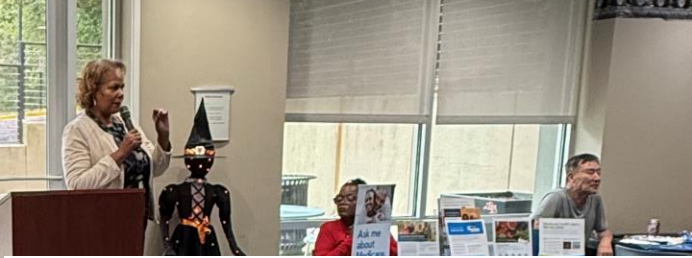




Successful Events

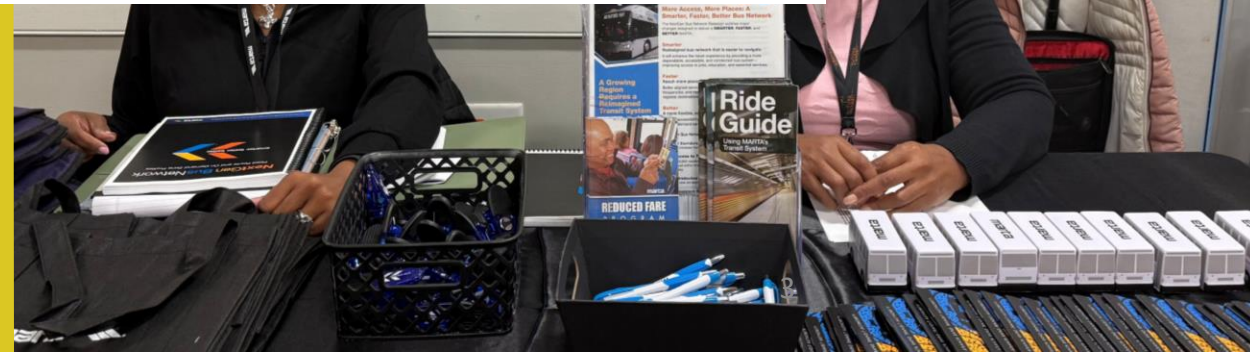
- ✓ MARTA HQ Open House (2/26)
- ✓ NexGen Open House - Doraville Station & GA State Station (2/26)
- ✓ Rep. Bryce Berry (HD 56) Town Hall (2/26)
- ✓ Barnes & Noble (2/26)
- ✓ Atlanta City Councilmember Amos State of the District (3/3)
- ✓ QLS Villa Senior Residences (3/5)
- ✓ Atlanta Beltline Q1 Public Briefing (3/5)
- ✓ Sandtown Community Meeting (3/5)
- ✓ Thomasville Heights Civic League (3/9)
- ✓ The Center for the Visually Impaired (3/12)
- ✓ MARTA 101 – Newly Electeds (3/13)
- ✓ Clayton State of the County (3/18)
- ✓ Regular Literature Drops at Libraries & YMCA's
- ✓ Monthly Toolkit Communications to Stakeholders





Scheduled Events

- ✓ MARTA HQ Open House (3/26)
- ✓ Clayton State University, College of STEM Keynote (3/26)
- ✓ Clayton County HOA President's Brunch (3/28)
- ✓ Fulton County Central Library (3/30)
- ✓ 404 Day (4/4)
- ✓ East Point City Council Meeting (4/6)
- ✓ East Central DeKalb Senior Center (4/14)
- ✓ Atlanta Streets Alive (4/19)
- ✓ American Society on Aging Annual Conference – Bus Tour (4/22)
- ✓ Forest Park Senior Center (4/24)
- ✓ Regular Literature Drops at Libraries & YMCA's
- ✓ Monthly Toolkit Communications to Stakeholders





Legislative Priorities

- Penny extension (HB1137) passed the House Transportation Committee unanimously on 2/19. Did not Crossover in time.
- Camera enforcement will be allowed at the beginning of service.



Thank You



Marketing Update: BIG 6 in 2026

Chinnette Cannida

Sr. Director of Marketing & Sales



MARTA Is Entering a New Era



Over the next year, riders will see some of the most significant improvements to MARTA's system in decades.

1. A redesigned **NextGen Bus Network**
2. Expanded **MARTA Reach** on-demand service
3. A new **Breeze** open fare payment system
4. **CQ400** modern rail cars
5. The **Rapid A Line Bus Rapid Transit** service
6. Global visibility during the **FIFA World Cup**



Big 6 - Campaign Objectives

Marketing and communications help ensure these investments translate into real benefits for customers.

Our Big 3 Priorities:

1. **Awareness:** Inform customers about major system improvements and service changes.
2. **Education:** Help riders understand how to use new services and technology.
3. **Adoption:** Encourage customers to try transit and “Let MARTA DRIVE!”



Integrated Marketing Approach

An integrated media strategy to maximize awareness and reach diverse audiences.

Digital Media

Digital display

- Streaming TV & video
- Streaming audio (Pandora, Spotify)

Paid Social Media

- Facebook & Instagram
- YouTube

Out-of-Home

- Digital billboards
- Transit advertising (buses, trains, stations)

Traditional & Direct

- Print media
- Email
- Radio



NextGen Bus Network & MARTA Reach Est. 40M Impressions

Expanding Mobility Options

The NextGen Bus Network redesign and MARTA Reach service will expand access and flexibility across the region.

Marketing efforts focus on:

- Educating riders about route improvements
- Promoting MARTA Reach as a first-and last-mile solution
- Helping customers plan trips under the redesigned network



Your MARTA experience is changing soon

MARTA Reach in Service Now
MARTA's new on-demand transit service is operating in 12 designated zones. Reach offers curb-to-curb shared rides and easy connections to fixed bus routes and rail lines. See zone maps and download the app at itsmarta.com/reach.



A better Breeze fare payment system launches March 28
From March 28 to May 2, both the current and new Breeze systems will be live. During that time, customers can spend down their stored fare, purchase a new Breeze card, or tap to pay with a bank card or digital wallet for faster, easier entry at new faregates and validators. Learn more at itsmarta.com/breeze.



Bus routes change on April 18
A smarter, faster, better bus network is coming. Bus service will be more consistent, more frequent, and provide more access. Find a map of your new route and more at itsmarta.com/nextgen.



Learn more
itsmarta.com



Your MARTA bus route is changing

April 18 [See your new route](#)



marta | NextGen Bus Network

Tu ruta de autobús de MARTA cambiará

18 abril [Encuentra tu nueva ruta](#)



marta | NextGen Bus Network

Better Breeze – Est. 50M Impressions

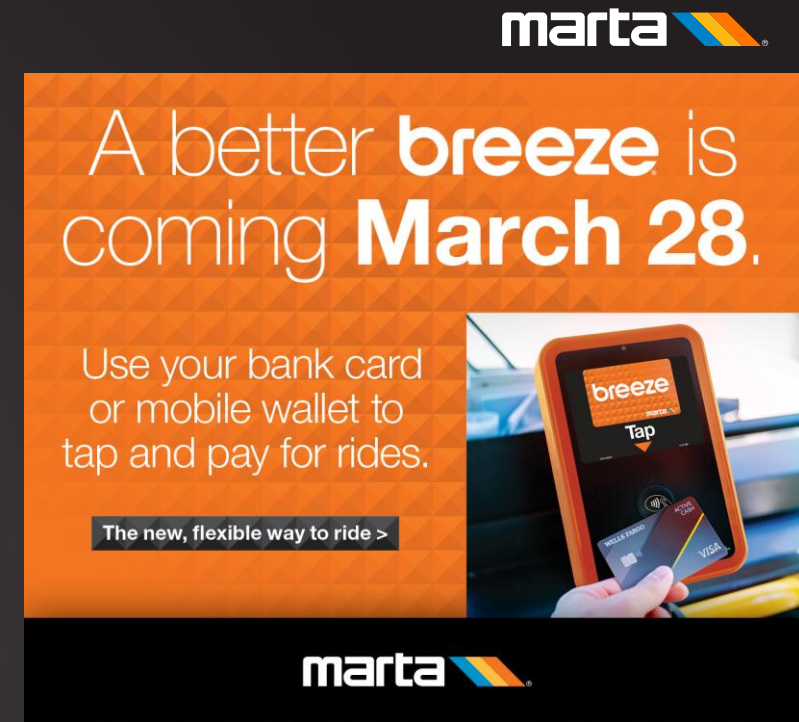
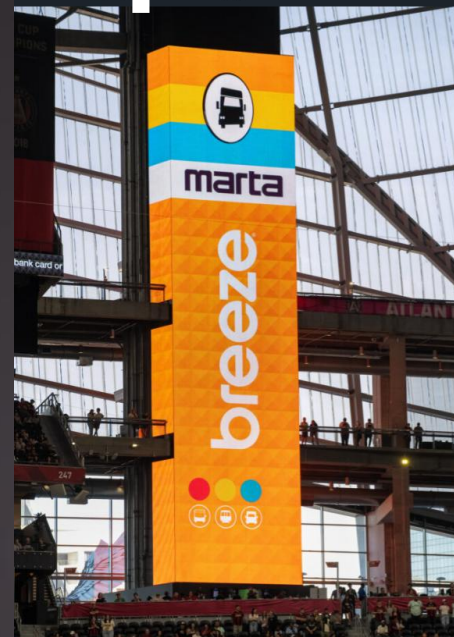
Modernizing the Rider Experience

The Breeze upgrade introduces a simpler and more convenient way to pay for transit.

Messaging highlights

- Tap-to-pay convenience
- Faster boarding
- Mobile wallet compatibility
- Seamless customer experience

Marketing efforts focus on **customer education and early adoption.**



Celebrating Major System Milestones

Two key initiatives will be highlighted through milestone communications and events.

Rapid A Line Bus Rapid Transit – Fall 2026

- Introduction of MARTA's first BRT service
- Launch awareness and ribbon-cutting events

CQ400 Rail Cars – June 2026

- Rollout of MARTA's modern rail fleet
- Updates shared through MARTA communications channels



Both initiatives will be highlighted through:

- Ribbon-cutting events
- Stakeholder engagement
- Media and digital promotion

FIFA World Cup Marketing Strategy

Est. 300M Impressions

Preparing Atlanta for a Global Audience

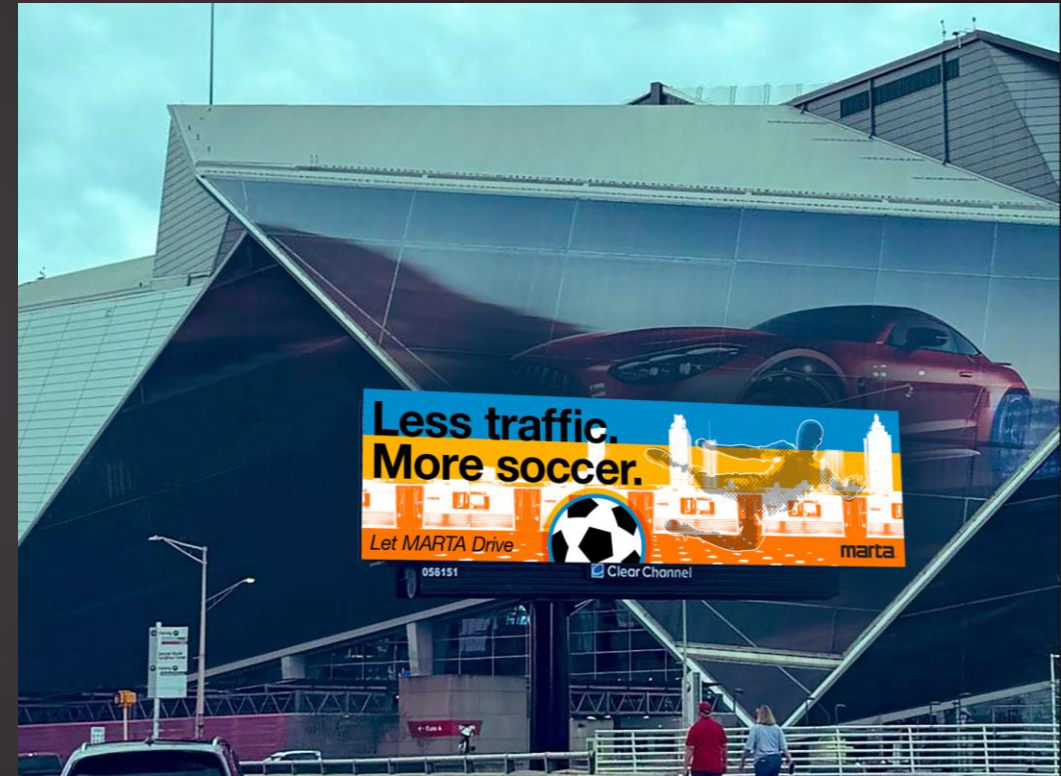
Atlanta will host multiple FIFA World Cup matches, bringing visitors from around the world.

MARTA's marketing campaign focuses on:

- Educating visitors on how to ride MARTA
- Promoting transit as the easiest way to reach stadiums and destinations
- Reaching regional and international audiences

Our campaign includes:

- Digital media targeting visitors and soccer fans
- Local and international media placements
- Transit and outdoor visibility across Atlanta



Marketing by the Numbers

Across these initiatives, MARTA's marketing campaigns deliver large-scale visibility.

~390M+

- Total estimated campaign impressions

\$500K+ (to-date)

- Advertising revenue secured from FIFA sponsor partnerships

10+

- Integrated marketing channels used

Metro-wide visibility

- Digital billboards and transit advertising

Global audience preparation

- Campaigns reaching residents, visitors, and international fans



Thank You



MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

November 2025 – February 2026

MARTA Releases A Custom Outkast-Inspired Bus For The 25th Anniversary Of The Iconic Atlanta Duo's Groundbreaking Album, 'Stankonia'

Outkast and MARTA both play huge roles in the fabric of Atlanta's culture... and now, they're coming together for an epic collab!

* SECRET ATLANTA



MARTA unveils Outkast bus design for 'Stankonia' album's 25th anniversary

STANKONIA

NOVEMBER IMPRESSIONS

1,000 News Media

1,400,272 Social Media

DEKALB COUNTY

MARTA Breeze upgrade gets on track in metro Atlanta



DeKalb County CEO Lorraine Cochran-Johnson appoints Devon Hudson to MARTA Board



Coming soon...

Sound up!



marta

00:02



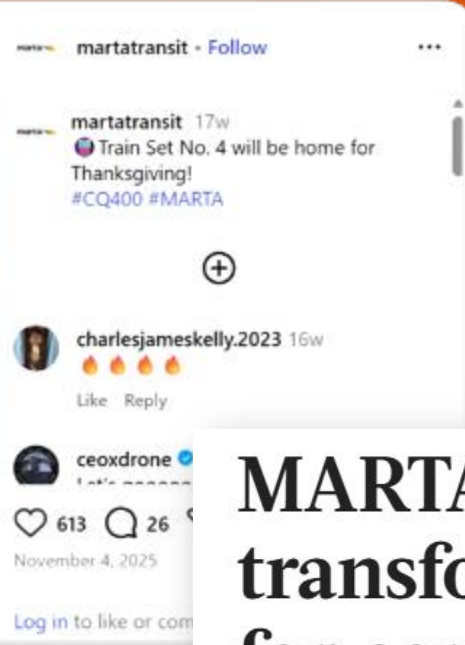
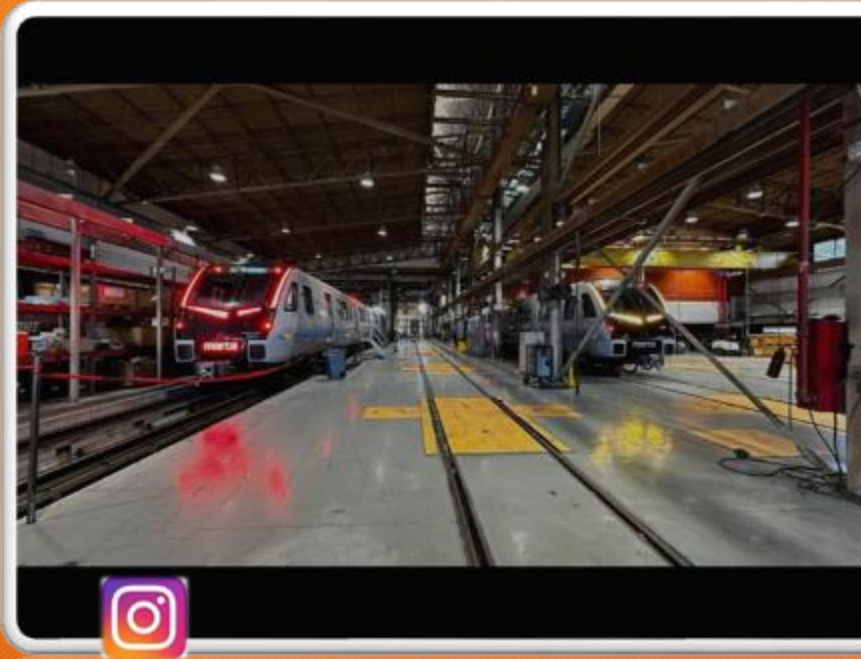
MARTA holiday bus offers free rides through year's end



How MARTA's upgraded entry, exit points will look and function soon

Systemwide installation of new MARTA tap-and-go infrastructure has officially launched





NOVEMBER METRICS

96% Positive & Neutral
\$27M AVE

MARTA's Art in Transit director transforms Atlanta transit into canvas for community expression

RoughDraft
atlanta



Eat near MARTA — it's smarta

ATLANTA
BUSINESS CHRONICLE

URBANIZE ATLANTA

'Surgical deconstruction' phase at MARTA's main transit hub begins

DECEMBER IMPRESSIONS

1,270 News Media

1,055,058 Social Media

MARTA renaming downtown CNN Center Station ahead of FIFA World Cup

©CBS NEWS

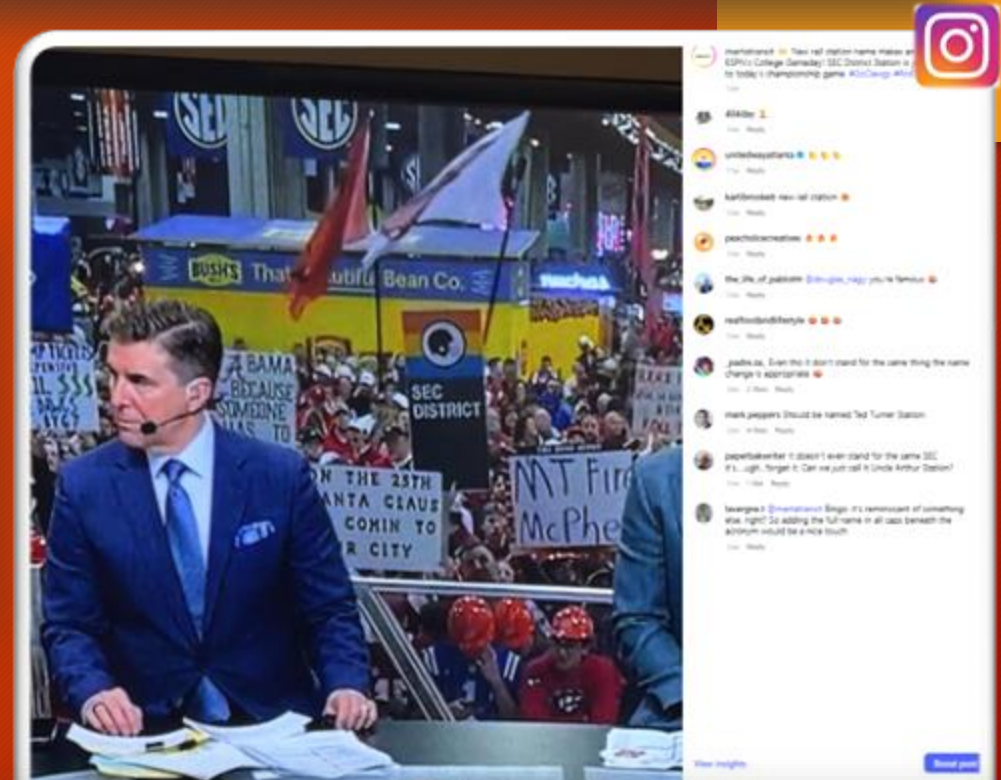
Spotlight On: Jonathan Hunt, Interim General Manager and CEO, MARTA



The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

MARTA chief says new train cars give smooth, quiet ride

MARTA to buy 30 new buses with \$20M federal grant



MARTA says NextGen bus network will launch in April

ALIVE

A race to ride every MARTA station: Team targets Guinness World Record in Atlanta

CBS NEWS

DECEMBER METRICS

97% Positive & Neutral
\$37M AVE

MARTA partners with RideCo to improve paratransit service

MASS TRANSIT



JANUARY IMPRESSIONS

1,500

News Media

650,249

Social Media

MARTA transit system sees decline in violent crime, MARTA interim CEO says



'New era' for MARTA coming in 2026, officials say



MARTA leader shares World Cup readiness with lawmakers



MARTA meetings will inform community about new bus network

FULTON NEIGHBOR



Three young men attempt MARTA world-record ride to show Atlanta's transit is reliable

©CBS NEWS

JANUARY METRICS

84% Positive & Negative
\$57M AVE

MARTA to implement inclement weather service plan this weekend

Clayton News



MARTA Ramping Service Back Up as Metro Atlanta Recovers from Weekend Ice Storm

MARTA urges passengers to spend down stored fares before Better Breeze fully arrives



MARTA pivots, will allow Breeze card funds to transfer to new payment system



FEBRUARY IMPRESSIONS

2,360

News Media

602,771

Social Media

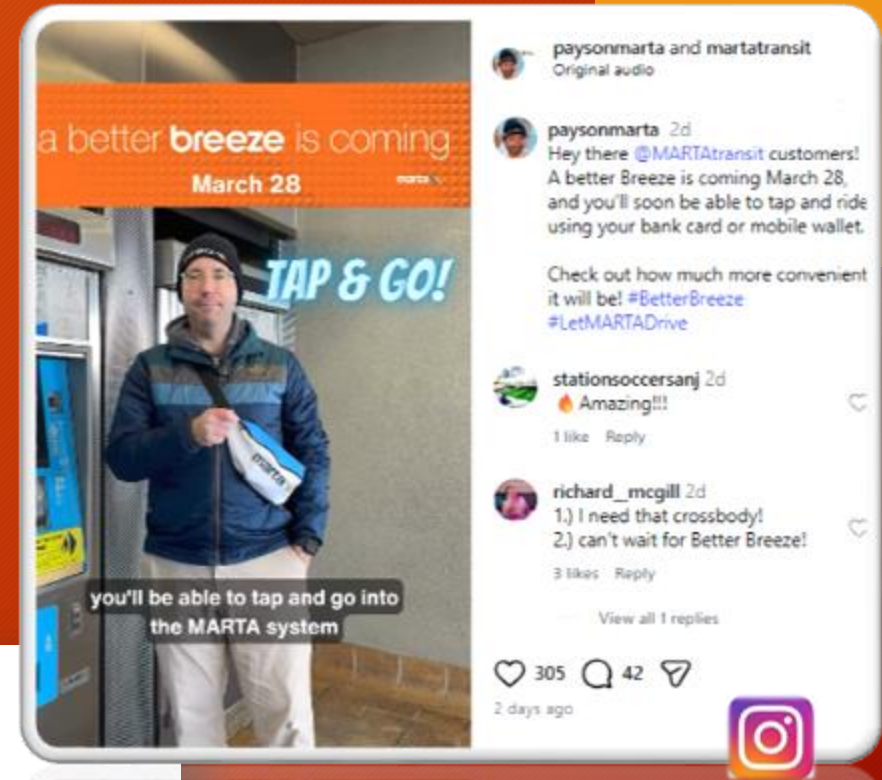
Footage shows moment MARTA train rams into fallen tree and derails

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Inside MARTA's new train cars: An inside look at the fleet – and the veteran conductor helping launch it

©CBS NEWS

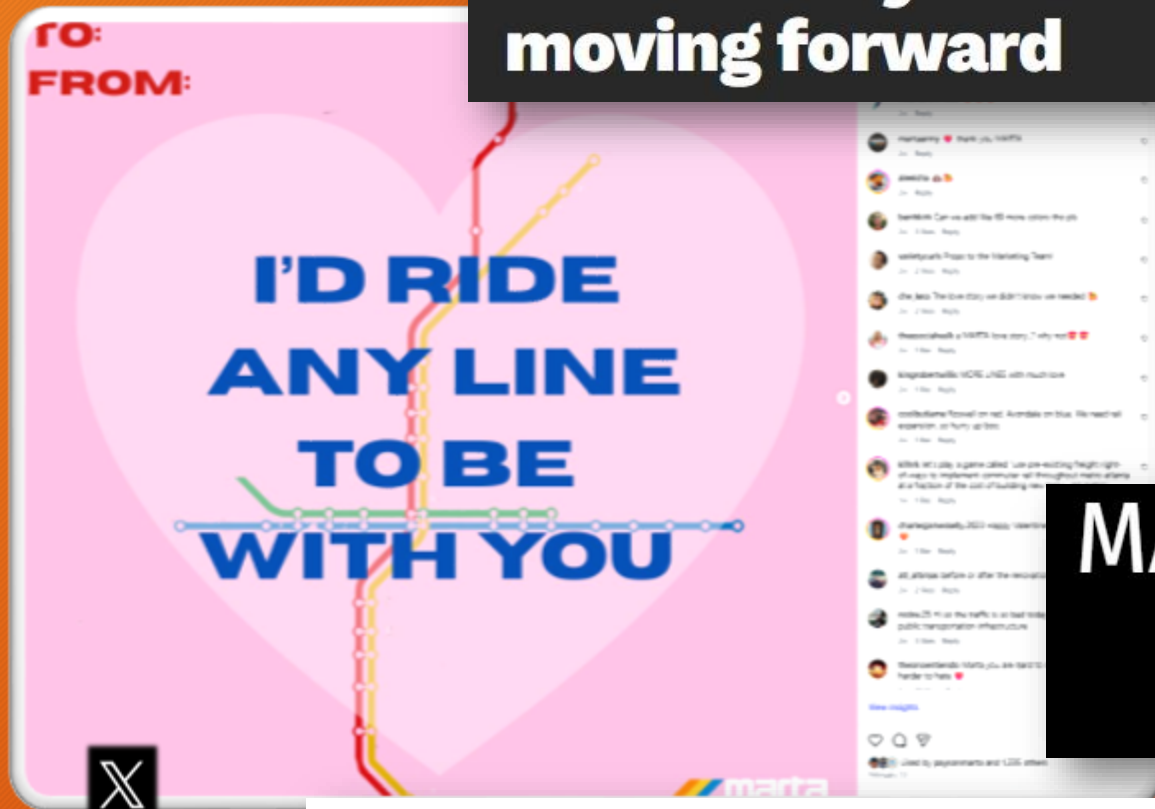
MARTA to launch Rapid A-Line in two phases



MARTA Breeze card balances will transfer when new system comes online

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Atlanta City Council wants say in More MARTA projects moving forward



FEBRUARY METRICS

87% Positive & Neutral

\$41M AVE

the Southerner

MARTA expands safety measures, prioritizes student security

Operations return to normal after trespasser at Lenox MARTA station

FOX5
ATLANTA

As World Cup nears, 2026 will be a transformational year for MARTA

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

When the international fans depart, MARTA's service and infrastructure improvements will remain for metro Atlanta.



New railcars and contactless payments headline MARTA's 2026 modernization



MARTA to host open house previewing 'Big 6 in '26' projects



BIG 6 IN '26
NEWS MEDIA
SOCIAL MEDIA
STORYTELLING
ENGAGEMENT



MARTA set to launch on-demand transit in 12 specific zones

MARTA Reach system will be free to ride for first three weeks, transit agency reports



MARTA holding information sessions on NextGen Bus Network ahead of spring launch



MARTA REACH
MARCH 7

NEXTGEN BUS NETWORK
APRIL 18

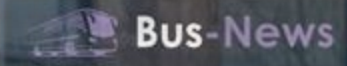
MARTA bus routes are changing, agency working to get word out on NextGen plan



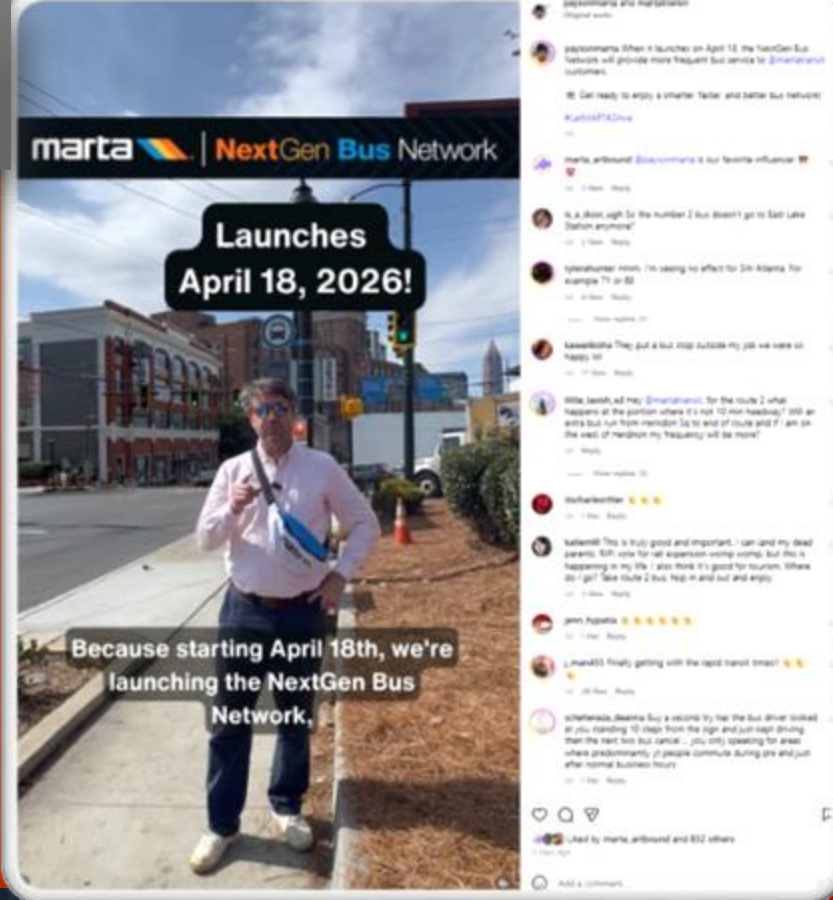
MARTA announces launch date for NextGen Bus Network



US: MARTA to Launch NextGen Bus Network in April



MARTA to launch revamped bus network, 'last-mile' van service



MARTA continues installation of new tap-to-pay fare system



Better Breeze blows into Atlanta's transport ticketing system ahead of World Cup

Railway Gazette INTERNATIONAL

MARTA Breeze card balances will transfer when new system comes online

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

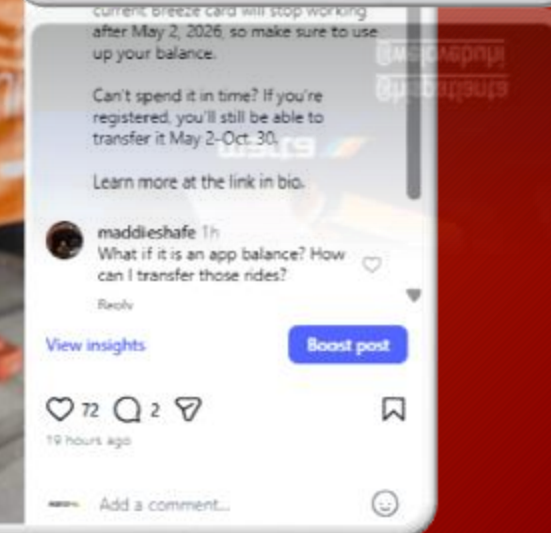
MARTA prepares for new tap-to-pay fare collection system ahead of 2026 World Cup

WABE PBS npr

MARTA gives list of stations undergoing construction, new faregates installations

ALIVE

BETTER BREEZE MARCH 28



MARTA announces launch date for Summerhill BRT line



Bus rapid transit riders will pay fares in advance to speed up boarding



Since groundbreaking, the project has faced challenges including the discovery of old infrastructure during excavation and a battery recall affecting the New Flyer battery-electric buses purchased to operate on the line. These unforeseen circumstances have delayed completion of all 14 BRT stations and may require supplemental vehicles to support initial service.

When Phase 1 launches on April 18, 2025, it will include:

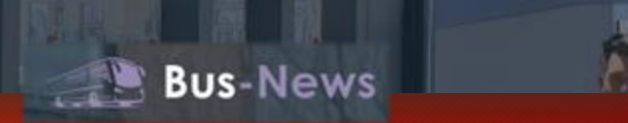
- Service hours from 5 a.m. to 1 a.m.
- Dedicated bus lanes with transit signal priority in areas where construction is complete.
- Temporary bus stops located near stations in areas still under construction.

Additional details on how to ride the new line including station locations, temporary stop information, and updated Breeze fare payment instructions will be shared soon.

RAPID A-LINE

PHASE ONE – APRIL 18

MARTA Rapid A-Line to Begin Phased Introduction in April



MARTA Launching BRT Line

Officials say Atlanta's airport, MARTA ready for FIFA World Cup soccer fans

ANF ATLANTA NEWS FIRST

FOX 5 ATLANTA

STREETZ 94.5
Atlanta's Number 1 Hip Hop Station in the Streets

TELEMUNDO ATLANTA

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

2026 FIFA WORLD CUP

JUNE 11 – JULY 19

Z105.7

WABE PBS npr

ALIVE

WSB-TV 2 ATLANTA

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS THE ATLANTA VOICE

URBANIZE ATLANTA

MARTA preps for massive ridership during FIFA World Cup

MARTA CEO says Atlanta transit ready for FIFA World Cup: 'Safe, clean, reliable service'



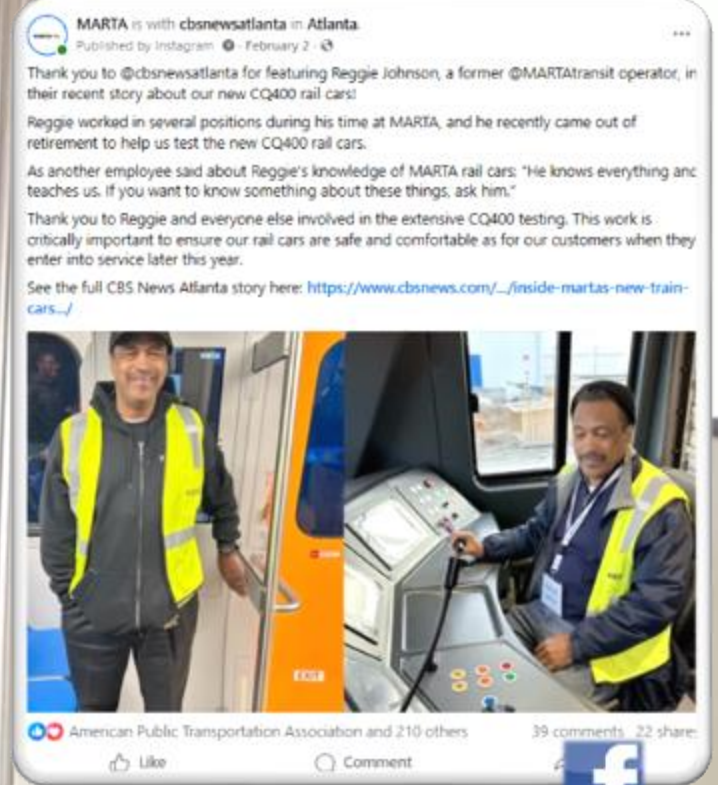
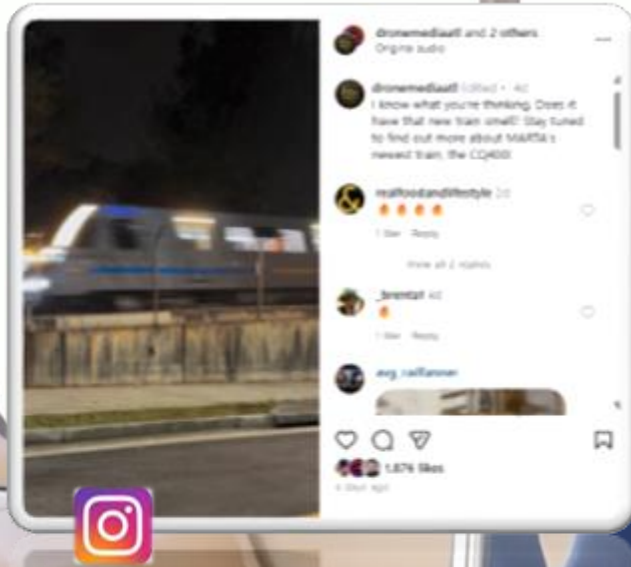
OPINION

As World Cup nears, 2026 will be a transformational year for MARTA

When the international fans depart, MARTA's service and infrastructure improvements will remain for metro Atlanta.



QUESTIONS



Why Atlanta's New MARTA Railcars Are A Big Improvement For Comfort And Security
Islands

NEW THIS MORNING

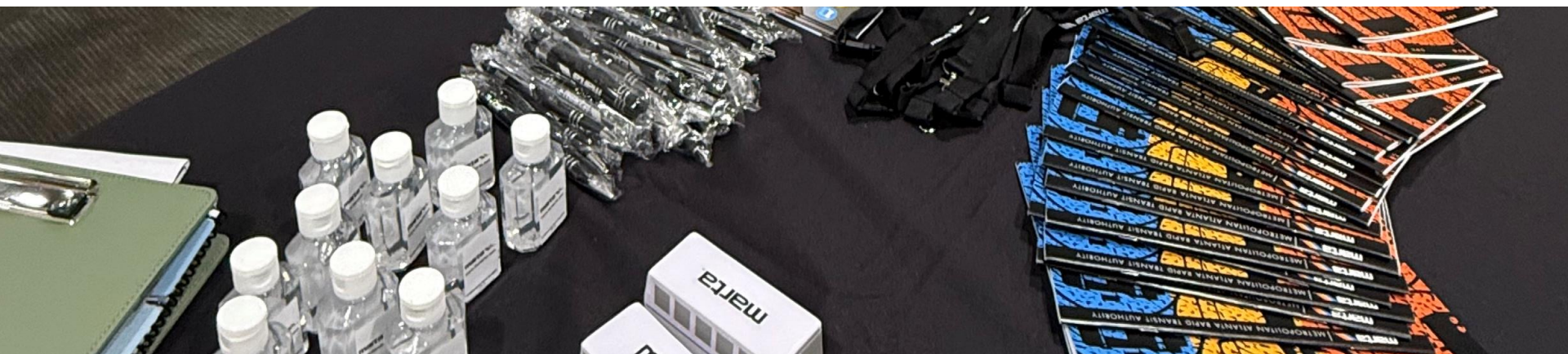
CBS NEWS ATLANTA

INSIDE MARTA'S NEW TRAINS



External Relations Board Update

Jennifer Larosa, Sr. Director Government & Community Affairs
February 26, 2026

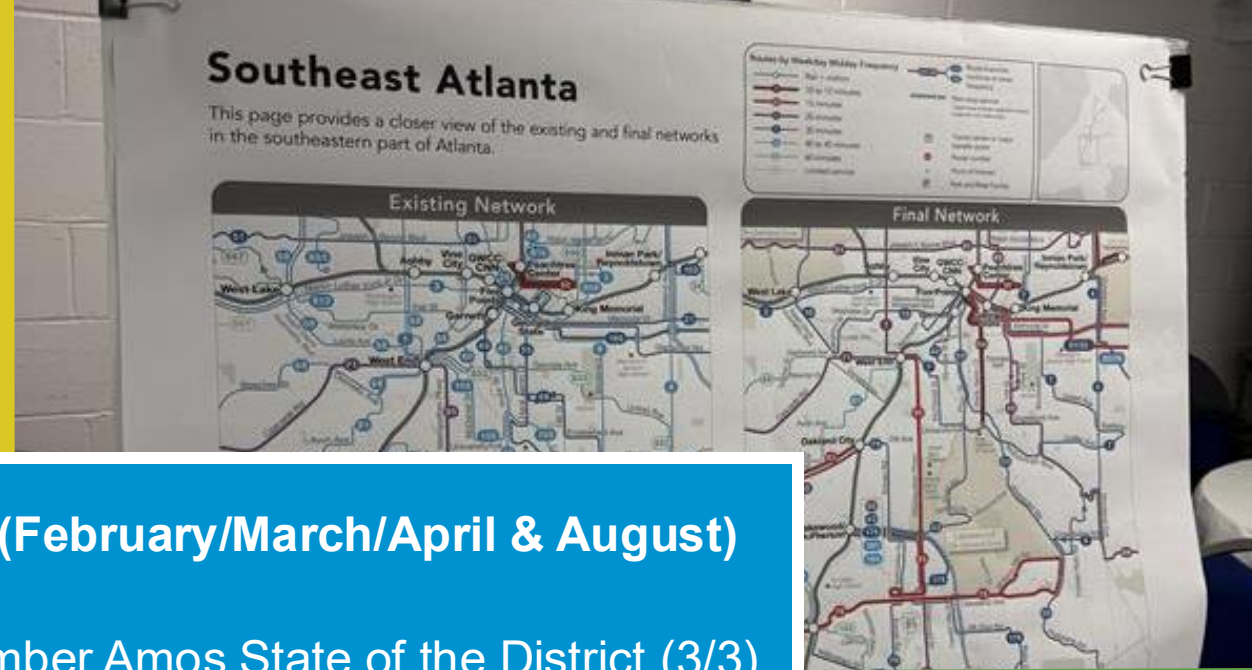




Successful Events (January/February)

- ✓ South DeKalb Senior Home REACH Event (1/27)
- ✓ Clark Atlanta University Event (1/29)
- ✓ MARTA Open House at HQ (1/29)
- ✓ Leadership DeKalb (1/29)
- ✓ DeKalb Commissioner Johnson's Quarterly Breakfast (1/31)
- ✓ QLS Center (CoSF) REACH Event (2/2)
- ✓ Rosa Parks Transit Equity Day (2/4)
- ✓ RAC Meeting Engagement (2/4)
- ✓ Dorothy C. Benson Senior Center Meeting (2/11)
- ✓ Columbia Senior Residences at Edgewood (2/12)
- ✓ District 6 South Fulton Councilmember Williams-Brown Townhall (2/17)
- ✓ District 1 City of South Fulton Councilmember Rowell Townhall (2/18)
- ✓ Trinity Towers Senior Meeting (2/19)
- ✓ District 11 Atlanta City Councilmember Martin Townhall (2/19)
- ✓ NextGen Station Pop-ups (2/2, 2/3, 2/10, 2/12, 2/16, 2/19, 2/25)
- ✓ Regular Literature Drops at Libraries
- ✓ Monthly Toolkit Communications to Stakeholders





Scheduled Events (February/March/April & August)

- ✓ MARTA HQ Open House (2/26)
- ✓ District 3 Atlanta City Councilmember Amos State of the District (3/3)
- ✓ Atlanta Beltline Q1 Briefing (3/5)
- ✓ MARTA HQ Open House (3/26)
- ✓ NextGen Station Pop-ups (2/26)
- ✓ American Society on Aging Conference (4/22)
- ✓ District 3 Clayton Commissioner Allen - Citizens' Academy (8/6)





Legislative Priorities

- Meetings
 - Delegation meeting at the CAP (1/30)
- Penny extension (HB1137) has been committed to House Transportation Committee and awaits a hearing



Thank You

