

APPENDIX F

CONCEPTUAL PHASE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

MARTA Five Points Station Transformation Public Engagement Events Summary Report

Date: December 15, 2022

This summary report is inclusive of all in-person, virtual, and online engagement events and activities conducted through Dec. 9, 2022.

Public Engagement Launch - National Voter's Registration Day Pop Up

The MARTA Five Points Station Transformation (FPT) project launched its first public engagement event on September 18, 2022. Hummingbird and MARTA hosted a pop up event at Five Points Station to coincide with National Voter's Registration Day. We engaged approximately 200 people during this event. Our setup included some of the current design concepts and renderings of the FPT displayed in the concourse for MARTA riders and visitors to view and share feedback. Flyers were passed out with a QR code to direct people to the project website for more project details, updates, and to share additional feedback. Questions were asked of riders to engage them on their ideas and feelings towards the FPT. Ideas boards were set up and gathered over 75 comments. Participants were offered MARTA swag for sharing their input. The main themes of concerns and improvements shared by riders were:

Concerns

1. Safety
 - a. "I want the station to be safe. Don't feel safe at Five Points"
 - b. "More MARTA Police"
 - c. "Waterproof / Non-slip floors"
2. Cleanliness
 - a. "Clean Bathrooms / Riding MARTA since 2016"
3. Accessibility inside the platform
 - a. "Elevators that work for the handicap"
4. Signage (many said the station was confusing to maneuver)
 - a. "Better signage for infrequent users"
5. Unhoused population
 - a. "Services for the unhoused"
6. Non-working bathrooms and lack of access to water

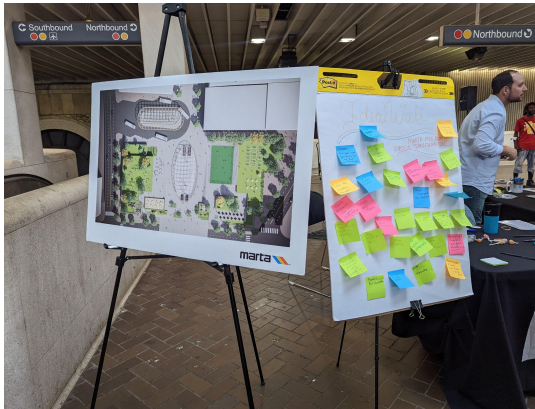
Improvements

7. Local art / artists
 - a. "More local art! Remove/redo statues/ include art from local schools"
8. More welcoming atmosphere
 - a. "My input for Five Points hire people who can help elders or any with informations anytime"
9. Restaurants and retail in close proximity and/or inside station
 - a. "Food/retail vendors on both sides of gates "

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10. Access to Underground Atlanta

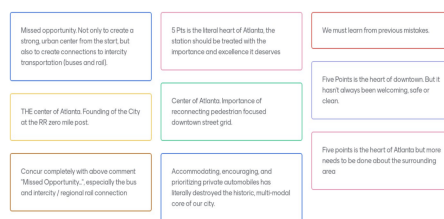
a. "Keep underground added new business"



MARTA Riders and Visitors Engage with Design Concepts and Ideas Boards at FPT Pop-Up on National Voter Registration Day

Stakeholder and Public Open House (In-Person & Virtual)

The MARTA FPT virtual and in-person Open House on October 18, 2022 was a huge success! During the in-person and virtual Open House, Hummingbird and MARTA engaged over 120 stakeholders and community members and received 348 comments captured through an interactive Mentimeter presentation, Zoom Q&A, and sticky notes. The virtual Open House had a highly interactive presentation on the past, present, and future of the Five Points Station. The slides contained photos of the initial construction of the Five Points Station, the present-day view, and DRAFT design concept renderings of what the future Transformation could look like. Each image presented a question asking stakeholders and community members to share their concerns and aspirations for the FPT. The same images and questions were present at our in-person Open House located in front of the Five Points Station Peachtree Street entrance. Tables had large boards with various photos, renderings, and questions related to the past, present, and future of the Five Points Station. Attendees wrote their thoughts on sticky notes and attached them to the relevant image and question. Participants were offered MARTA swag for sharing their input.



MARTA FPT In-Person Open House (Left) and Virtual Open House Mentimeter Presentation Slide Responses (right)

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End-of-Line Pop Up Events

Desired Outcomes

After launching a successful Open House to share information about the FPT, Hummingbird and MARTA hosted six (6) pop up events at end-of-line stations throughout the month of November 2022 to continue sharing information and collecting feedback about the Transformation with and from riders who rely on the Five Points Station. The pop up events were held at the following stations: Indian Creek, College Park, H.E. Holmes Bankhead, Doraville, and North Springs. The team set three goals: disseminate information about the Transformation, collect qualitative data on community input, and connect community members to the project website for updates and feedback.

Strategy

The selection of the End-of-Line FPT Pop Up events were based on MARTA's target demographics and diversity of riders age, income, education, and inclusion of riders from across the MARTA system. All six (6) pop up events were held at end of the line MARTA stations. To ensure a successful amount of rider engagement, it was agreed that all pop up events would take place during peak hours, 4 pm to 6 pm.

Implementation

Hummingbird used two different approaches to implement the End-of-Line Pop Up events. Our first approach was stationary and included tables, renderings, sign-up sheets, and flyers. One team member from MARTA and Hummingbird remained at the table handing out flyers and engaging with individuals who showed interest in the renderings. Another Hummingbird team member walked around the MARTA station handing out flyers and directing riders to the pop up table.

The second approach was mobile and included flyers, a counter app, incentives (candy) and virtual notepads. Two (2) Hummingbird team members walked along the bus concourse handing out flyers and asking MARTA riders for feedback regarding the Transformation:

- What changes would you like to see once the FPT is complete?
- What would you like to see prioritized in the FPT?
- Do you have any concerns or suggestions for improvements?

Hummingbird staff used a counter phone app to keep track of the number of MARTA riders engaged and a virtual notepad to capture riders' comments. One MARTA team member handed out flyers and shared handheld pictures of renderings. MARTA staff counted the number of flyers they had at the beginning and end of the pop up event to determine the number of riders they engaged or used a counter app on their phone.



Feedback

During the six (6) End-of-Line Pop Up events throughout November 2022, we engaged over 713 riders and received 114 comments. Common themes that were expressed at these events:

1. Safety
 - a. "Pedestrian safety and accommodations"
 - b. "More MARTA police / security"
2. Cleanliness
 - a. Trash and recycling bins (more interesting design)
 - b. "I smell weed sometimes. The station itself has weird smells."
 - c. More Bathrooms
3. The Unhoused Population
 - a. "Do something about the homeless people, it's a disgrace. My heart goes out for them and the situation they're in. People have to put up with craziness, there's no security, people are speaking in wild kinds of ways. They have no regard for others. Anything could happen, someone could pull out a gun. I saw a little girl marking up the train with a marker. The regular people are just mute because anything could happen. Why would you want to use these facilities if your life is in danger? We are held hostage by the lowest denominator."
4. Desired features and amenities
 - a. Coffee shops, retail stores, and more
 - i. "There used to be a library, bring that back. It was like a kiosk."
 - ii. Vending machines, quick food options, coffee, healthy food options
 - b. Live music and public art
 - i. "More black art of our beautiful skin and our beautiful behavior. Let the art reflect our deliciousness"
 - ii. "Live music and busking (voluntary street performances)"

Recap of End-of-Line Pop-Ups

Indian Creek Station

We estimate that 275 people were engaged from the number of flyers distributed. A handful of people did stop by the table to ask questions, but they were MARTA employees. The bus bay seemed to have more traffic, therefore we shifted our attention to that area and received ten (10) comments. These comments revealed two key themes:

- Concerns for safety at Five Points Station
- Consistent and quality service of MARTA overall

College Park Station

91 people were engaged, and 32 comments were recorded. These discussions revealed three key themes:

- Concerns for safety at Five Points Station
- Cleanliness of Five Points Station
- Consistent, quality service of MARTA overall



H.E. Holmes Station

73 people were engaged and 33 comments were recorded. Standout comments include:

- "My kids use the soccer field there and they love it"
- "Public art and murals"
- "Pay for food and drinks with MARTA card"

Bankhead Station

37 people were engaged and we captured ten (10) comments. One comment that we would like to acknowledge is from a rider who said "I would like to see more vending machines and coffee stations". Discussions revealed the following key themes:

- Concerns for safety at Five Points Station
- Cleanliness of Five Points Station
- Need for amenities (coffee shops and more shops overall)

Doraville Station

148 people were engaged with around 20 people offering comments. Comments and feedback included these key themes:

- Improved signage and wayfinding
- Maintenance of the station and preventing leaks after rain events
- Places to get a quick bite to eat and coffee
- Cleanliness and personal hygiene
- Safety and security
- Less loitering around the station
- Pedestrian safety and accommodations around the station

North Springs Station

We engaged 89 riders and captured nine (9) comments. Although, only a few riders at this station utilize Five Points Station. One response we would like to acknowledge is from a rider who mentioned that "there used to be a library; bring that back. It was like a kiosk". These discussions revealed the following key themes:

- Cleanliness of Five Points Stations
- Concerns for safety

CoUrbanize Website Engagement

Since the FPT public launch in September, the coUrbanize website has 979 views, 57 followers, and 155 comments. The graph below shows how comments have steadily increased over time beginning with the public launch and the National Voter's Registration Day pop up at Five Points Station in September, and a significant increase occurring at the start of the end-of-line stations pop ups in November.

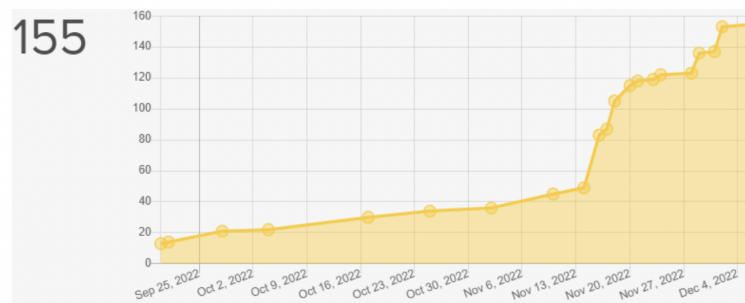
979 Website Visitors

57 Followers

155 Total Comments

Engagement Over Time

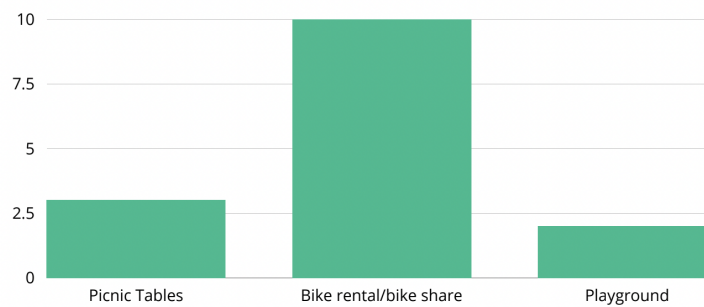
The cumulative number of comments and replies on coUrbanize over the project's online engagement period



Suggestions for improving safety inside and outside of the Five Points Station include developing pedestrian and bike lanes, increasing security, and addressing the unhoused population.

Feedback on station features includes more signage, restrooms, and art that reflects the community. One individual suggested partnering with Georgia State University and having students submit their artwork to be displayed in the Five Points station. Additional suggestions for features and amenities include picnic tables, playground, coffee shops, restaurants, clothing stores, and bike rentals.

The project will include a public plaza and community space. What features and amenities would you like to see included?



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Website visitors have shared comments on retail options in the area including:

"Small businesses! We do not need more massive chains like Starbucks, etc. Keeping rent affordable will allow businesses with less capital to move into the area. Perhaps the retail area is only rented to businesses that meet certain criteria. Some ideas would be cafes, bakeries, and lunch spots."

Suggestions for a change in the overall environment of the station and the public plaza to become more inviting and vibrant has been suggested by many individuals. Proposed changes include hosting more public events, live music, seating, green space, and lighting to make the station more lively, engaging, and welcoming. As the center of Atlanta and the first thing many people see, commenters believe that not only should the station be clean and well lit, but it should also represent and honor Atlanta's culture and history by including murals and public art and historical exhibits. "Five Points is the center of Atlanta and should be an exciting public space for all Atlantans. It represents the first thing people see of Atlanta when they visit from the airport. It's where exciting things should be happening."

Conclusion

Across all engagements through December 9, 2022, we engaged a total of 2,012 MARTA stakeholders, riders, and visitors, and received a total of 692 comments. We gathered feedback and input that would add value to the design process by utilizing traditional and nontraditional engagement strategies. We experienced the most success at the following stations through the Open House and End-of-Line Pop Up events: Five Points, Indian Creek, College Park, and H.E Holmes Stations. We were able to engage our target demographics, a large number of riders, and capture more significant feedback. The main concerns of safety, cleanliness, accessibility inside the platform, signage, the unhoused population, and non-working bathrooms are carried across diverse groups of MARTA riders and visitors. Alongside the concerns, users of Five Points Station offered improvements and ideas that, again, resonated with a diverse group of people. These improvements include adding local art/artists, a more welcoming atmosphere, more restaurants and retail access to the station, and access to Underground Atlanta. After conducting the End-of-Line Pop Up events, it became clear that the demographic makeup surrounding a station impacts how much, or if at all, the riders at that station use the Five Points Station and the significance of their feedback and comments.

Lessons Learned

- Stationary vs mobile engagement: we noticed it was more advantageous to walk around the station instead of setting up a table. By going to the people instead of waiting for them to come to us, we were able to gather more meaningful feedback.
- Buddy systems: by working in pairs, we were able to fully engage with each customer while capturing the details of our conversations.
- Target population station selection: identify the stations that our target demographics visit most often and prioritize these stations for outreach.
- Bilingual staff: it would be beneficial to have a Spanish-speaking staff member at future pop up events in communities with larger Spanish populations.
- The best location to engage riders was the bus platform and waiting area for pick-ups. People were willing to chat while waiting for the bus or their ride.
- Suggest to those who did not have any comments at the moment to visit the website and share feedback later.
- Identify stations that most Five Points Station riders connect to and potentially host a second round of pop up events at these locations.
- For future pop up events, we may want to measure traffic peaks and adjust the timing accordingly.
- Follow-up by sharing how updates on the website and riders feedback is used in the design of the FPT.
- Share more information about the project timeline and MARTA's 2040 program, and that it does not mean that the FPT will be completed in 2040.
- Create a video for the website explaining the FPT process.