




City of Ann Arbor

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES — PLANNING DIVISION

301 East Huron Street | P.O. Box 8647 | Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107-8647
p. 734.794.6265 | f. 734.994.8312 | planning@a2gov.org

Ann Arbor Design Review Board Application

Section 1: General Information	
Project Name:	New Blake Transit Center
Project Location and/or Address:	331 S. Fourth Avenue Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Base Zoning District, Character Overlay District, and Building Frontage Designation:	D1, Downtown District; Midtown Overlay Zoning District Building Frontage: Fifth Avenue
Type of Site Plan Petition (check):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site Plan for City Council approval <input type="checkbox"/> Site Plan for Planning Commission approval <input type="checkbox"/> PUD Site Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Planned Project Site Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative Amendment with façade change
Developer:	Ann Arbor Transportation Authority 2700 S. Industrial Highway Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Property Owner:	Ann Arbor Transportation Authority 2700 S. Industrial Highway Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Property Owner's Signature:	 Mr. Terry D. Black, Manager of Maintenance
Developer's interest in property if not owner:	Not Applicable

Design Team (include all individuals, firms and groups involved):	<u>Architect/Civil/Landscape Architect:</u> DLZ Michigan, Inc. Stephen P. Kromkowski, AIA Mark A. Mattson, PE Robert M. Sherman, RLA	<u>Structural:</u> Robert Darvas Associates, P.C. Erik R. Majcher, SE, PE <u>Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing:</u> DiClemente Siegel Design, Inc. Andy Wieland
Contact Person (name, phone number and email of one person):	DLZ Michigan, Inc. Stephen P. Kromkowski, AIA Office: (517) 393-6800 Cell: (574) 514-8238 Email: skromkowski@dlz.com	

Section 2: Project Details

Project Specifics:	Site size (sq. ft.): <u>17,470.84</u> Total floor area (sq. ft.): <u>10,783</u> Number of stories: <u>2-Stories</u> Building Height (ft.): <u>37'-7"</u> Ground floor uses: <u>Lobby and Accessory Uses</u> Upper floor uses: <u>Offices and Accessory Uses</u> Number dwelling units: <u>0</u> Number off-street parking spaces: <u>0</u> Open space (sq. ft.): <u>5,000</u>
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On a separate sheet(s), please address each of the following in separate statements:

2a. Brief description of design concept (what the project/structure looks like).

2b. Brief description of development program (intended uses, known or possible tenants, etc.)

Section 3: Project Design

On a separate sheet(s), please address each of the following in separate statements:

- 3a. Describe the context of the site.
- 3b. Is there an inspiration or a theme for the design concept? Describe.
- 3c. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for its Character District.
- 3d. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for Context and Site Planning.
- 3e. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for Buildings.
- 3f. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for Building Elements.
- 3g. If desired, note any other important elements, features or design concepts not covered above that will help the Design Review Board understand how the project fosters excellence in the design of the built environment of downtown Ann Arbor, the overarching goal of the Downtown Design Guidelines.

**New Blake Transit Center
Ann Arbor, Michigan**

**ANN ARBOR DESIGN REVIEW
BOARD - SUBMITTAL**

**Supplement to Design Review Board
Application**

Section 2 and Section 3

Prepared For:

Ann Arbor Transit Authority
22700 South Industrial Highway
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

Project Site:

Blake Transit Center
331 S. Fourth Avenue
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104



DLZ Project No: 1041.6366.00

Date: March 28, 2012

SECTION 2: PROJECT DETAILS

2a. Brief description of design concept (what the project/structure looks like).

The facility was constructed in 1988 and became the Blake Transit Center in honor of Richard D. Blake in 1989. The facility was developed as the central transfer station for the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA). The facility is located at 331 S. Fourth Street in Ann Arbor.

The planning and design of the new facility responds directly to the following goals:

- Site and programming design shall plan for the current and future needs of the AATA's operations to better serve the patrons of the City of Ann Arbor, Michigan
- A design that maximizes the financial resources available.
- A facility that incorporates materials and construction that is durable, low maintenance, and provides aesthetic character.
- A design that promotes sustainable design practices and achieves Gold certification from the United States Green Building Council.

The form and exterior elevations of the building responded to the function of the interior spaces and the specific goals and design objectives of the Project. The exterior is expressed in simple, geometric forms that create visual interest.

Construction materials are selected based on durability and low maintenance, cost efficiency and aesthetic character. Stone, masonry, glazing and metal panels are utilized on the building's exterior, while masonry and gypsum board on metal framing is used within the building's interior.

2b. Brief description of development program (intended uses, known or possible tenants, etc.)

The primary focus of the building layout is to meet the needs of the AATA's personnel and the facility operations. The building establishes public and secured zones of the building. The Lobby, located on the first Floor level provides for public access with restroom facilities and clear path and visibility for the Ticket Booth for the patrons.

Beyond the Lobby space, the building is secured with restricted authorized access. The lower level contains Mechanical space, storage and additional unassigned space. The First floor includes Driver restrooms, Ticket Booth, Operations and the Security office. The Second Floor Level provides for Dispatch, AATA office area(s), and the driver break areas. A conference room for AATA training seminars and other activities is also provided on the Second floor level.

SECTION 3: PROJECT DESIGN

3a. Describe the context of the site.

The Blake Transit Center site has frontage on Fourth and Fifth Avenue and is bounded on the south and north by surface parking lots. The site is neighbored by the Ann Arbor Public Library, several residences, a funeral home, the federal office building/post office, and a multi-level parking structure.

The new transit building is located in the southeast corner of the existing Blake Transit site, kitty-corner to the existing Blake Transit facility. This location also removes the existing building from the Fourth Avenue right-of-way. The overall site development maximizes the development of the site and provides people a safe, accessible route to and from transit boarding areas. Pedestrian circulation enters the site via public sidewalks located along Fifth and Fourth Avenue, as well as from the transit vehicles. A single dedicated transit lane lies west to east through the site with four (4) angle parking berths and two (2) parallel parking berths along the south side of the bus lane. The site will permit a maximum of six (6) transit vehicle berths.

West of the new building, a plaza area will also be provided for additional public gathering and queuing space for transit operations. Along Fourth Avenue, additional bus pick-up/drop-off stations are located along the northbound lane of Fourth Avenue, one (1) on the south side of the west entry drive and three located north of the west entry drive. South of the site is the Fifth and William surface parking lot. East of the new building is the Ann Arbor Library. In addition, public parking is provided in the Fourth and William parking structure and S. Fifth Avenue underground parking structure. The parking lot for the federal building is located north of and adjacent to the transit center's proposed bus lane.

3b. Is there an inspiration or a theme for the design concept? Describe.

The fundamental inspiration for the design of the new Blake Transit Center evolved from the concept of book-ending the Fifth Avenue corridor, by providing a facility with similar form, proportion, and material to the City Hall project yet remaining unique and aesthetically interesting. By utilizing these similar elements, it was our intent to create a subconscious link with City Hall and begin to establish a civic typology within the City of Ann Arbor. Additionally, the proposed material usage would provide a stark contrast to the brick masonry buildings lining the Fifth Avenue corridor thereby juxtaposing the new Blake Transit Center against the traditional urban fabric, further highlighting its civic significance within the Midtown District.

The new Blake Transit Center design also responds directly to the functional and operational goals and objective of the Ann Arbor Transit Authority. One goal is to create an aesthetically pleasing facility which reinforces, promotes and encourages public transportation and improve the quality of life for the Ann Arbor community.

3c. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for its Character District.

The Blake Transit Center is located in the Midtown Character Overlay Zoning District. The new transit center will continue serve as a southerly anchor to the Fifth Avenue corridor and will have a stronger connection to Fifth Avenue versus its existing location on 4th Avenue.

3d. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for Context and Site Planning.

The design of the site has been organized to safely and efficiently transport AATA's patrons to the transfer station site and facilitate pedestrian circulation to sidewalks on Fourth and Fifth Avenue. DLZ reviewed design plans prepared for South Fifth Avenue Underground Parking Garage and Street Improvements. The proposed Fifth Avenue Streetscape Improvements served as a spring point for the ground plane geometry of the pedestrian sidewalks and selection of concrete as the pavement material.

The concrete sidewalks in the Fourth and Fifth Avenue right-of-way will be based on the City of Ann Arbor Standard Specifications for construction. These sidewalks will have common concrete score joints and will not incorporate any color or texture other than at sidewalk crossings at the drive approaches, where detectable warning plates will be installed. Decorative exposed aggregate banding in the transit site walks has been incorporated to provide visual interest and highlight the transit boarding areas. Heated pavement is proposed as an add-alternate, if sufficient funds are available. Bike parking for eight (8) bicycles will be accommodated within the west pedestrian plaza at the westerly end of the building.

Site furniture will be placed at regular intervals along the transit site walk and concentrated west of the building. These include benches, trash receptacles, recycling receptacles, and bicycle parking. The finishes on the site furniture will consist of brushed aluminum and standard black to coordinate with the contemporary color palate of the transit center. Public restrooms and drinking fountain is located inside the new transit building during business hours. Public art display areas have been identified west of the building, but are currently undeveloped details. Public art display along the northerly perimeter of the site will need to be coordinated with the site security and clear vision requirements of the federal building.

Landscape plantings are planned west of the building along the south property line. The plant palette for the Transit Center will reflect a desire to provide interest to the pedestrian through foliage, texture, and color, and forms. Plant materials will be selected whose size and habit are conducive to the programmatic requirements of the Transit Center with respect to required overhead and lateral clearances from pedestrians. The intent of these plantings is to provide a measure of shade during summer and a barrier to discourage pedestrians that may walk north-south to the Fifth and William parking lot. These plantings will consist of columnar trees and shrubs that are tolerant of the urban environment, including salt tolerance, and as specified by City of Ann Arbor Approved Tree Species List.

3e. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for Buildings

The project responds to the Design Guidelines for the Building. The building massing creates interest and is visually divided into smaller components to create an appropriate scale and proportion. Building offsets also eliminate the creation of single flat static plane. In addition, the composition and placement of the different exterior materials responds to the building placement. The east façade responds to the street edge and the new 5th Street improvement/develops, while the north and west facades are internal to the site and visually connected to the adjacent sites.

3f. Describe how the project responds to the Design Guidelines for Building Elements

The project responds to the Design Guidelines for building elements through the combined use of building materials and building massing. Clear demarcation of the building entries along the east and west faces are offset from the upper level building plane. Direct visual connection is provided all entries and public interior spaces at the ground floor level. The building is fully accessible and reinforces the street level experience. The placement of exterior glazing, the sizes and scale reinforces the visual interest of the building's exterior. The north pedestrian level is fully glazed at the street level which establishes transparency and promotes an open and inviting building interior at grade. The design has selected materials that reinforce the buildings massing and incorporates sustainable building materials including local manufactured materials which are low maintenance with long life spans.

3g. If desired, note any other important elements, features or design concepts not covered above that will help the Design Review Board understand how the project fosters excellence in the design of the built environment of downtown Ann Arbor, the overarching goal of the Downtown Design Guidelines.

The Project design reinforces the City of Ann Arbor's and the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority partnership and commitment to enhance the downtown district and improve the overall pedestrian experience. The Project is registered with the United States Green Building Council and has an established goal to achieve Gold level certification. The new Blake Transit Center when completed will eliminate the existing facility which no longer responds to or reflects the current overall goals and principals of the Downtown district. The new Blake Transit Center create a new destination point for the district, which in conjunction with other adjacent downtown improvements will improve the areas quality of life and experience.

Photograph Log and Surrounding Site Context

Ann Arbor Transportation Authority-New Blake Transit Center



Photograph No. 1

Existing Transit Center, 4th Avenue Looking South



Photograph No. 2

From 5th & William Parking Lot, Looking South to Funeral Home

Photograph Log and Surrounding Site Context

Ann Arbor Transportation Authority-New Blake Transit Center



Photograph No. 3

From 5th & William Parking Lot, Looking East to Ann Arbor Library



Photograph No. 4

From NE Corner of Blake Transit Site, Looking East to Ann Arbor Library

Photograph Log and Surrounding Site Context

Ann Arbor Transportation Authority-New Blake Transit Center



Photograph No. 5

Looking Northeast across 5th Avenue, NW corner of Library in foreground



Photograph No. 6

Looking North-Northeast along 5th Avenue

Photograph Log and Surrounding Site Context

Ann Arbor Transportation Authority-New Blake Transit Center



Photograph No. 7

From Southwest Corner of 5th Avenue and Liberty, Looking Northeast



Photograph No. 8

Federal Building, Looking North-Northwest from 5th Avenue

Photograph Log and Surrounding Site Context

Ann Arbor Transportation Authority-New Blake Transit Center



Photograph No. 9

Federal Building, Looking North-Northeast from 4th Avenue



Photograph No. 10

4th and William Parking Structure, Looking South from East Side of 4th Avenue

Photograph Log and Surrounding Site Context

Ann Arbor Transportation Authority-New Blake Transit Center



Photograph No. 11

4th and William Parking Structure, Looking Northwest from 5th and William Surface Lot



Photograph No. 12

4th and William Parking Structure, Looking West from 5th and William Surface Lot