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A. INTRODUCTION/HOW TO USE THESE GUIDELINES
INTRODUCTION

The Walnut Creek Transit Village Design Guidelines set forth a long-term vision for the physical form and character of the Walnut Creek Transit Village.

Overarching Goal

The overarching goal for the design of the Transit Village is the creation of a new transit-oriented neighborhood in Walnut Creek that will: (1) act as a prominent gateway to its downtown core, (2) be integrated with the rest of the city’s fabric, and (3) fulfill the city’s full potential for sustainable growth.

The design of the Transit Village should capitalize on its proximity to multiple forms of mass transit and ensure that future higher-density, mixed-used development also provides an attractive, livable and unique Transit Village. The Transit Village should be characterized by a mix of uses, walkable streets, and convenient access to transit from adjacent neighborhoods.

This document is intended to set a standard of quality for the design of the proposed Transit Village which developers, builders, architects, engineers and city staff, among others, can refer to as a baseline standard. These Design Guidelines set the criteria and basis of evaluation for obtaining Design Review Commission approvals during the design review phase of the project.

BACKGROUND

The City of Walnut Creek is at a significant point in its history. It is poised to make strides in its maturation as one of the Bay Area’s most desirable places to live, work and shop; a dynamic retail hub, job center, cultural center, and bedroom community that serves as a key economic engine, and cultural magnet for the Bay Area region.

In the past three decades, Walnut Creek has committed to long-term planning efforts that have catalyzed economic growth and revitalization. These efforts are summarized in: (1) The Alma Avenue Area Specific Plan in 1985. This plan created an urban neighborhood of high quality, high density housing located adjacent to the downtown Pedestrian Retail District. (2) The North Main Street / Ygnacio Valley Road Specific Plan of 2002. This plan’s implementation commenced with the City’s investment in new streetscape improvements along a one-third mile stretch of North Main Street. Other related planning efforts currently underway are bearing fruit in the form of new building applications across all sectors.

These long-term planning efforts, in combination with increasing market demand for an urban lifestyle situated near transit, all provide the ripe conditions for catalytic revitalization.

Future development in the Transit Village, thoughtfully designed and executed, will build upon these trends and will offer an historic opportunity to create employment, housing, and shopping strategically located close to BART.

A Transit Village

In 2000, BART’s Board of Directors authorized the initiation of a mixed-use development at the Walnut Creek BART Station including residential, retail, and office space. The planning process began with an analysis of existing policies and physical site and traffic conditions and was followed by the exploration of several land use and circulation alternatives for the Walnut Creek Transit Village.
INTRODUCTION/HOW TO USE THESE GUIDELINES

WALNUT CREEK TRANSIT VILLAGE DESIGN GUIDELINES

PART ONE
FINAL 02/20/13

INTRODUCTION/HOW TO USE THESE GUIDELINES

The Design Guidelines are organized into four distinct Parts:

PART ONE: Introduction
This part of the Design Guidelines provides an overview of the project and how it relates to other documents, outlines the project’s policy framework and provides a broad overview of the project site. It also describes the project’s vision, urban design goals, and guiding principles. Finally, this part presents the urban design framework for the Transit Village.

PART TWO: Public Realm
This part of the Design Guidelines provides an overview of the design goals for the Public Realm including streets, sidewalks, paseos, plazas and gardens. This part also analyzes the qualitative design features to be considered by area. General guidelines applicable to the overall Transit Village are provided and address landscape materials, street furnishings, lighting, public art, sustainable design, signage, and wayfinding.

PART THREE: Private Realm
This part of the Design Guidelines provides an overview of the design goals for the Architecture and Urban Design aspects of the Transit Village. Introductory topics including (a) site context, (b) contextual influences and (c) urban design considerations for each parcel are outlined with site-specific goals and opportunities. Fundamental components of building design such as architectural style and materials, massing, facade articulation, ground level treatment and other key design features are also addressed.

This part concludes with a listing of general guidelines applicable to all buildings within the Transit Village, including frontage types, off-street parking and loading, building materials, roof top equipment, utilities and trash enclosures.
These site-specific Design Guidelines are to be used to evaluate mixed-use and residential development for the Walnut Creek BART Station development site described as the Walnut Creek Transit Village. The Design Guidelines are to be used in concert with (1) The City of Walnut Creek General Design Guidelines Planned Unit Regulations, (2) the development regulations provided by the project’s Planned Development Ordinance and (3) applicable General Plan policies.

These guidelines provide direction to developers and property owners regarding Transit Village design components including site design, building massing, ground level treatment, facade articulation, architectural features, parking and access, signage, open space and street character. These guidelines also illustrate desired development on three specific parcels and related infrastructure that currently comprise the Walnut Creek BART station and existing parking & bus facilities.

Where there are conflicts between these Guidelines and those included in the previously adopted Walnut Creek design review guidelines, these specific guidelines once adopted shall be applied to mixed-use and residential development applications for the Transit Village North, South, and East parcels.

OVERVIEW OF RELATED POLICY DOCUMENTS

The Walnut Creek Transit Village Design Guidelines are consistent with the following documents:

1. City of Walnut Creek General Plan
2. BART TOD Guidelines and Policy
3. CCCTA Bus Policy Framework
4. City of Walnut Creek Design Review Guideline
5. Walnut Creek Bicycle Plan

Section B. Policy Framework summarizes the key principles, goals, and policies that will guide the design guidelines and recommendations set forth in Parts II and III of this document.

ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT

The Goals and Guidelines detailed in this document are intended to assist in the project’s implementation. However, given that tension may arise between competing uses in this mixed-use development, the goals herein are meant to be balanced. Ultimately, the success of the Transit Village will be measured qualitatively not by strict compliance with each individual goal, but by substantial achievement of numerous elements of the most important goals.

The General Plan designates the western portion of the Transit Village as Mixed-Use-Residential (MU-R) and the eastern portion as Public/Semi-Public (PU). In order to permit residential and commercial development on the eastern portion of the Transit Village, a General Plan Amendment will be required to expand the mixed-use designation to the entire site. To accommodate higher-density mixed-use development, a General Plan Amendment will be required to increase the height limit from 35 to 50 feet (consistent with Plan goals, Measure A requirements, and Housing Element recommendations). Increasing height limits on these sites to levels allowable under Measure A will require a re-zoning from Community Facility (CF) to Planned Development (P-D). The P-D zoning process will establish the site plan details, building setbacks, the distribution of uses, number of residential units, parking provisions and building height in accordance with Measure A requirements.

Implementation of the project will require a public-private partnership between a private developer who will execute the Transit Village Plan’s vision and public entities including the City of Walnut Creek, BART, The Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (CCCTA), Contra Costa Fire Protection District, and other public agencies such as utility providers.
### SUMMARY OF CITY OF WALNUT CREEK GUIDING PRINCIPLES, GOALS AND POLICIES

This Section summarizes applicable goals and policies from relevant City of Walnut Creek, BART, and CCCTA documents, and provides the policy framework for future development of the Transit Village.

#### City of Walnut Creek General Plan

Adopted by the City Council in 2006 after an extensive planning process, The Walnut Creek General Plan 2025 provides a clear framework for future development in Walnut Creek. The open space, built environment, transportation, safety, noise, and governance goals, policies, and actions set forth in the General Plan inform many of the priorities in these Guidelines and ensure their consistency with the General Plan. In general, development within the Transit Village should promote the General Plan’s vision and goals by:

- **a. Creating a multi-modal transit and pedestrian-oriented center;**
- **b. Locating mixed-use residential development near transit;**
- **c. Enhancing transit and pedestrian linkages to surrounding areas including Downtown; and**
- **d. Enhancing the Walnut Creek BART Station as an attractive and unique gateway for the city.**

The column to the right lists applicable goals, policies and actions from the City of Walnut Creek General Plan’s Built Environment, Transportation, Natural Environment and Public Spaces, Safety and Noise and Quality of Life Chapters:

#### Built Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Encourage housing development that helps to reduce the increase in traffic congestion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Encourage housing and commercial mixed-use development in selected locations that enhances pedestrian access and reduces traffic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>Encourage mixed-use development at and near the Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill BART Stations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Coordinate the location, intensity, and mix of land uses with transportation resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Create livable, well-designed, mixed-use communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Enhance connectivity and mobility throughout the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>Enhance the entrances to the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>Preserve and enhance the visual amenity provided by the open spaces, hills, and creeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>Improve the appearance and prominence of designated scenic corridor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Transportation

**Policy 5.1**  
Promote bicycle use as an alternative way to get to work, school, shopping, recreational facilities, and transit stops.

**Policy 5.2**  
Provide facilities that encourage and support bicycle travel.

**Goal 6**  
Provide a safe and attractive walking environment accessible to all.

**Policy 6.1**  
Provide safe and attractive pedestrian routes along arterials and collectors leading to schools, along arterials or collectors that carry high traffic volumes, on all downtown streets, along major streets leading to the downtown, and on all streets to transit facilities.

**Policy 6.4.2**  
Ensure that new parking lots in commercial and multi-family housing development provide safe and direct paths to building entrances from sidewalks and on-site parking areas.

**Goal 7**  
Increase transit ridership and service to employment, schools, shopping, and recreation.

**Policy 7.2**  
Encourage improvements to transit systems that connect Walnut Creek residents to regional locations.

**Policy 7.3**  
Link high-density residential developments, schools, employment centers, and shopping areas via transit.

### Safety and Noise

**Goal 5**  
Promote Public Safety

**Action 5.5.1**  
Incorporate crime-reduction and public safety features in the design and planning of private and public projects.

**Goal 8**  
Provide compatible noise environments for new development, redevelopment and condominium conversions.

**Policy 8.1**  
Apply the noise and land use compatibility table and standards to all residential, commercial, and mixed-use proposals, including condominium conversions.

**Action 8.2.2**  
For new multifamily residential projects and for residential component of mixed use development, use a standard of 65 Ldn in outdoor areas, excluding balconies.

**Action 8.2.3**  
Strive for a maximum interior noise level of 45 Ldn in all new residential units.

**Action 8.2.4**  
For new downtown mixed-use development or for new residential development affected by the noise from BART or helicopters, ensure that the maximum noise levels do not exceed 50 Ldn in bedrooms and 55 Ldn in other rooms.

### Natural Environment and Public Spaces

**Goal 7**  
Provide publicly accessible outdoor spaces in the Core Area.

**Policy 7.2**  
Encourage the development of, maintenance of, and connectivity between high-quality public spaces in the Core Area.

### Quality of Life

**Goal 12**  
Maintain and enhance Walnut Creek’s position as a leading regional cultural and arts center.

**Action 12.1.2**  
Require installation of easily viewable public art on private properties or payment of an in lieu fee in accordance with the Public Art Master Plan.
POLICY FRAMEWORK

WALNUT CREEK TRANSIT VILLAGE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Housing Element

The Housing Element, last updated in 2009, serves as a companion to the City's General Plan. The Housing Element encourages the development of mixed-use residential uses in the Core Area and Downtown, and the development of higher density residences near public transit, major thoroughfares, shopping, and employment centers in order to meet regional housing needs.

The Housing Element specifically identifies the Walnut Creek BART Station as an opportunity site where increasing heights to Measure A limits would encourage the development of higher-density housing. The Housing Element recognizes that a mixed-use or transit-oriented development on this site would require a General Plan Amendment and a Planned District rezoning to allow for residential use and a height increase to 50 feet.

Economic Development Plan

In May 2004, the City Council adopted the Economic Development Plan to complement the City's General Plan. Like the Housing Element, the Economic Development Plan identified the Walnut Creek BART Station as a key opportunity site for new residential development, to be studied in the subsequent 2006 General Plan update.

City Council Meeting

During a special City Council meeting held on January 8, 2008, the City Council identified guiding principles and goals for the Transit Village.

As a BART station, the highest priority for the site is to be a Regional Transit Hub with a focus on access and circulation, livability, and creating a unique sense of place.

Walnut Creek Bicycle Plan

The Walnut Creek Bicycle Plan last updated in 2011 includes goals, policies and actions which promote cycling as a desirable transportation alternative to the automobile. The Bicycle Plan creates a comprehensive vision that supports bicycle use in Walnut Creek, including the Walnut Creek Transit Village. Some of the goals of the Bicycle Plan include:

a. Promote bicycling as a viable and sustainable transportation option;

b. Provide a safe and attractive environment for bicycle travel;

c. Reflect Walnut Creek's regional importance to the bicycling community; and

d. Provide facility guidelines which encourage and support bicycle use for travel and recreation in Walnut Creek

Figure 1.1: The Downtown Walnut Creek Core
Specific Plans: North Main Street/Ygnacio Valley Road & Locust Street/Mt. Diablo Boulevard

The North Main Street/Ygnacio Valley Road Specific Plan, adopted by the City of Walnut Creek in 2002, focuses on roadway and pedestrian improvements and private redevelopment potential along the North Main Street corridor from Civic Drive to Ygnacio Valley Road. In 2005, the City completed the centerpiece of that planning effort, the reconstruction of public improvements along the North Main Street corridor. These improvements included underground utilities, widened sidewalks, additional landscaping and street trees, and reduced street width, resulting in the creation of an inviting pedestrian corridor between the Walnut Creek BART Station and the Traditional Downtown. The Locust St./Mt. Diablo Boulevard Specific Plan also focuses on development opportunities and improvements to the public realm.

Public Art Master Plan

Developed by the Walnut Creek Art’s Commission and adopted by the City of Walnut Creek in 2000, the Public Art’s Master Plan is based on a shared belief that public art enhances and defines a city’s image. This Master Plan requires that public art planning be integrated into development project planning at the earliest possible stage, be commensurate with the scale and visibility of the project, and be compatible with its architecture, landscape, and surrounding environment. The Master Plan specifically identifies the Walnut Creek BART Station as a priority public art site.

Walnut Creek Design Review Guidelines

The City of Walnut Creek’s Design Review Guidelines, last updated in 1999 are intended to assist applicants in understanding the standards of design used to evaluate projects submitted for Design Review approval. The Design Review Guidelines state in part:

“The Design Review Guidelines require new multi-family housing to address design issues such as scale and character, views, building facades, exterior site design and landscaping, building materials, and facilities.” (II. Residential Architecture, C. Multiple Family Residential).
The Walnut Creek’s Design Review Guidelines are consistent with this document and are used verbatim where applicable. However, due to the unique scale and nature of development envisioned for the Transit Village, the Walnut Creek’s Design Review Guidelines are used primarily as a starting point. In Parts II and III, the Design Review Guidelines are further developed into site specific Design Guidelines.

The Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (CCCTA), Bus Policy Framework

CCCTA, a joint powers agency of 11 jurisdictions including Walnut Creek, provides fixed route and paratransit service (County Connection) throughout the central Contra Costa County communities of Clayton, Concord, Martinez, Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek, Danville, San Ramon, Lafayette, Orinda, Moraga, and unincorporated communities. CCCTA drafted principles for BART and rail stations entitled “CCCTA Principles for Bus Transit Accommodation at BART and Rail Stations and Major Transit Centers in the CCCTA Service Area.” These principles aim to ensure that developers and planners of new and upgraded rail stations include thoughtful accommodation of buses in order to provide first-class, multi-modal travel options for the public with special focus on access and circulation, amenities, facility siting, and future planning.
BART TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT POLICY

BART TOD Policy

On July 14, 2005, the BART Board of Directors adopted a TOD Policy with the following policy goals (see Figure 1.8):

- **a.** Increase transit ridership and enhance quality of life at and around BART stations by encouraging and supporting high-quality transit-oriented development within walking distance of BART stations;

- **b.** Increase transit-oriented development projects on and off BART property through creative planning and development partnerships with local communities;

- **c.** Enhance the stability of BART’s financial base through the value capture strategies of transit-oriented development; and

- **d.** Reduce the access mode share of the automobile by enhancing multi-modal access to and from BART stations in partnership with communities and access providers.

Station Capacity Plan

The Walnut Creek BART Station has a capacity plan in place, approved by the BART Board of Directors, which allows increased ridership in the future. This capacity plan includes provision of emergency exit stairs at the ends of all platforms, new fare gates situated to the southwest of the existing fare gates, and new escalators to enhance rider convenience.

At this time, there is no implementation deadline for the Station Capacity plan. These guidelines endeavor to provide flexibility with respect to fulfilling future capacity plan requirements.

BART TOD Guidelines

BART’s TOD Guidelines, published in June 2003, are designed to guide planning and development on property surrounding BART stations. These guidelines specify target densities for residential development in station areas.

Bart’s TOD policy is aimed at reducing automobile use by enhancing multi-modal access to and from BART stations in partnership with municipalities and access providers. (See Figure 1.8)

These Guidelines define a successful TOD as accomplishing the following goals:

- **a.** Enhance customer safety and convenience;

- **b.** Create an attractive, dynamic station area;

- **c.** Increase ridership and revenue for BART;

- **d.** Take advantage of development opportunities and revenue generation for local jurisdiction;

- **e.** Improve system and station operational efficiency.

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**Figure 1.8: BART’s Circulation Hierarchy Diagram**
HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND MORPHOLOGY

By March 1913, the Southern Pacific Railroad regular passenger and freight service was operating between Walnut Creek and Oakland. The popularity of train travel waned, however, and regular commuter railroad service ended in 1934. (See Figure 1.9).

The Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system, approved by Bay Area voters in 1962, reintroduced train travel to Walnut Creek. In 1973, a BART station was established at Ygnacio Valley Road and Interstate 680 replacing two subdivisions with a number of small, post-World War II houses. (See Figure 1.11). In addition, a block with 146 small houses to the north of the BART station was gradually converted to mid-rise office buildings and became known as the “Golden Triangle.” By 1985, one million square feet of new office space had been constructed in the Golden Triangle. Residents’ concerns over accelerated growth and traffic congestion prompted the enactment of Measure A in 1985, a voter initiative which placed limits on building height.

Figure 1.10 depicts Ygnacio Valley Road in 1962, a two-lane roadway soon to be widened to four lanes to ease traffic heading west to the newly constructed Interstate 680. In 1972, the boulevard was widened again to its current configuration of six lanes.
**PHYSICAL CONTEXT**

**Existing Conditions**

The Transit Village Plan Area contains 16.1 acres and is surrounded by Ygnacio Valley Road to the south, Pringle Avenue to the north, Interstate 680 to the west and North California Boulevard to the east. (See Figures 1.12 and 1.13). Figure 1.14 depicts the elevated BART tracks and station platform, which divide the Transit Village site into east and west sides. A 4-story parking structure for BART patrons is situated on the western portion of the site. Surface parking and a bus intermodal occupy the rest of the site.

**Utilities and Infrastructure**

In 1954, AT&T-Bell installed a major fiber-optic line running from the site’s southern edge at Ygnacio Valley Road, across the site to the current intersection at Pringle Avenue and Riviera Avenue (See Figures 1.11 and 1.14). The fiber optic lines were aligned with Buena Vista Avenue which used to bisect the site. The line ranges from five to twenty feet below grade. In the late 1960’s,
the foundation of the BART tracks, platform and existing parking structure were designed around the fiber optic line in order to maintain its current placement. There is one manhole on the North Parcel which, according to AT&T, cannot be relocated. AT&T’s approval of any new building straddling the existing manhole is conditioned on permanent manhole access for future maintenance. AT&T has requested a six foot clear zone around the manhole with twelve foot clear height.

A change of land use and intensity envisioned in the Design Guidelines for this site will require an upgrade of the existing infrastructure and utility systems.

Pedestrian Access, Topography and View Corridors

Pedestrian access to the site is limited due to the site’s adjacency to I-680 to the west, and two wide arterials with fast moving traffic flanking the site to the south and east. Namely, Ygnacio Valley Road, a 6-lane route of regional significance to the south and North California Boulevard, a 4-lane arterial to the East. At 32 feet above the site’s high point, Hwy 680 acts as a physical and visual barrier to the adjacent overlook neighborhood. (See Figure 1.15). The limited number of signalized crossings further limits pedestrian access from neighboring districts. (See Figure 1.16).

The site drops about 21 feet from north-west to south-east. (See Figures 1.18 and 1.19). The site’s topography provides framed views of Mt. Diablo and nearby hills from the BART platform and at ground level. Development within the Transit Village should incorporate views of Mt. Diablo and nearby hills (Figure 1.17).
Figure 1.18: Existing Site Elevations Relative to Fare Gate

Figure 1.19: Existing Access, Topography, and View Corridors
SITE ANALYSIS

WALNUT CREEK TRANSIT VILLAGE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Building Types

The Transit Village is surrounded city-wide by a broad range of building types including office, retail, civic and residential buildings. Immediately surrounding the site are Class A office buildings to the south, east and north, residential/office use conversions across Ygnacio Valley Road, large scale retail and pedestrian retail buildings to the south-east and low-density, single-family homes across highway 680 to the west.

All of these building types establish an eclectic pattern of architectural styles, scale, and use which can inform an approach to the design of buildings in the Transit Village. Figures 1.20 through 1.24 exemplify some of the architectural styles throughout the city and directly adjacent to the site.
Street Types

An essential element of a successful Transit Village is ensuring that all users and service providers can easily gain access to and circulate within the facility. (See Figure 1.28)

Streets surrounding the Transit Village include:

Ygnacio Valley Road, a 90-foot wide (curb to curb), 6-lane route of regional significance with 10 ft. sidewalks on each side. (See Figure 1.25).

North California Boulevard, a 4 lane arterial street, 90 ft. wide (curb to curb), with 10 ft. sidewalks on each side. (See Figure 1.26).

Pringle Avenue, a 2 lane local street, 40 ft. wide (curb to curb), with 10 ft. sidewalks on each side. (See Figure 1.27).

Riviera Avenue, a 2 lane collector street, 36-40 ft. wide (curb to curb), with 5-7 ft. sidewalks on each side except near the BART Station where the sidewalk is on one side. (See Figure 1.15).

Short Street, a 2 lane private driveway, 24 ft. wide (curb to curb), with 5 ft. sidewalks on one side.

Oakland Boulevard, a one-way collector street, 24 ft. wide (curb to curb), with 5-10 ft. sidewalks on each side.

North Main Street, a 4 lane collector street, 80 ft. wide (curb to curb), with 10 ft. sidewalks on each side.
REGULATORY CONTEXT

Land Use and Zoning

The Transit Village is surrounded by an eclectic mix of office, retail and residential districts including the Golden Triangle, North Main Street, the Traditional Downtown, and the Pedestrian Retail District, all within a 1/2 mile radius, or a 10 minute walk. (See Figure 1.30).

The Transit Village currently has two General Plan land use designations as depicted in Figure 8, General Plan Land Use Map. The General Plan designates the western portion of the Transit Village as Mixed-Use-Residential Emphasis (MU-R), intended to encourage a combination of ground floor retail with office and/or residential uses above. The eastern portion of the Transit Village is designated Public/Semi-Public (PU), allowing for public facilities. A General Plan Amendment is required to expand mixed-use designation to the entire site. These Guidelines presume Mixed-Use Designation (MU-R) for all Transit Village parcels.
Figure 1.31: General Plan Land Use

Figure 1.32: Existing Zoning
FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR)

Transit Village uses are intended to be primarily residential (that is, an MU-R emphasis), with a combination of ground floor commercial/retail, office and flex space below residential uses.

Development within the Transit Village must be consistent with FAR requirements for the Core Area. Currently, these requirements specify commercial FARs for portions of the Transit Village. Accordingly, the project anticipates the need for a General Plan Amendment in order to extend to the entire site an MU-R designation, with its higher FAR range.

Building Height

Approved by voters in 1985, Measure A, the Building Height Limitation Initiative, established a maximum height of six stories for all buildings in Walnut Creek. As a result of General Plan and Measure A height requirements, there are currently two building height zones in the Transit Village, illustrated in Fig. 8 of the General Plan Height Limits. The General Plan specifies a maximum height allowance of 50 feet on the western portion of the site while on the eastern portion the maximum height allowance is 35 feet. The Housing Element specifically identifies the eastern portion of the Walnut Creek BART station as an area of potential height increase to 50 feet, within Measure A restrictions. Development within the Transit Village should be consistent with General Plan and Measure A height requirements. Accordingly, a General Plan Amendment will be required to increase the maximum height allowance from 35 to 50 feet for the eastern portion of the Transit Village.
COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROCESS

As previously mentioned, the goals and major design concepts of the Transit Village were developed over time through several staff and developer-led community workshops. These workshops guided the development of the goals outlined below, and inspired the urban design Vision for the Transit Village. (See Figure 1.34).

VISION STATEMENT

1. The overarching goal for the Transit Village is the creation of a new transit-oriented neighborhood in Walnut Creek that will act as a gateway to its downtown core, be integrated with the rest of the city fabric, and fulfill the city's potential for future growth.

2. The livability and viability of this development is paramount. The Walnut Creek Transit Village is envisioned as a true mixed-use neighborhood with several amenities for future residents and existing community members to enjoy. With attractively designed buildings and appropriate landscaping, the project should function as a desirable place for residents to live and the public to visit.

3. The residential density of the project should be maximized in order to leverage its status as the primary public transportation hub for Walnut Creek and surrounding areas. This density should be balanced with current land use regulations including Measure A height limits and approved zoning regulations so as to ensure proper setbacks, and considerations for light, air flow and access are planned for properly.

4. Residents should feel as though they are living in an active village in the heart of Walnut Creek. The location and design of individual buildings should enhance existing views, take advantage of topography and make use of the site in a sophisticated and thoughtful manner. The separation of private living/amenity areas from the public realm should be respected and planned accordingly. Opportunities for the combination of private and public areas is encouraged where appropriate.

5. Mixed-use retail is an important component of the development. The mixed-use/retail spaces must be attractive to prospective tenants and serve local residents as well as transit patrons and guests. The amount of mixed-use/retail spaces must be balanced with the physical constraints of the site and overall project viability. Mixed-use retail uses should be limited to ground floor locations where foot traffic and exposure is maximized. At the same time, flexibility within the ground floor uses should be encouraged to adapt to changing market needs.

6. The site is actively used by the public for access to transportation services. Public areas should be designed to encourage frequent public use and enjoyment, and to promote use of the public transportation system.
URBAN DESIGN VISION

PART ONE

URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

1. A Functional Multi-Modal Transit Center

Designing stations that cater to the transit user in both scale and function, with safe and attractive design, multi-modal connections, and a convenient mixture of uses, can encourage transit ridership and decrease reliance on the automobile. These Guidelines envision design that accommodates a mixture of transit-supportive uses including residential and retail situated immediately adjacent to the BART station. This policy direction is consistent with the goals of the Housing Element, Economic Development Plan, General Plan, BART’s TOD Policy and TOD Guidelines, CCCTA Principles, and Walnut Creek Bicycle Plan.

2. Logical Connections to Existing Streets

Providing clear physical and visual pedestrian and bicycle connections from transit facilities to employment centers, retail, and entertainment attractions encourages people to use alternatives to the automobile. The Transit Village should include site design elements to improve on-site connectivity and create clear connections to surrounding neighborhoods and downtown.

These characteristics are consistent with the goals of the General Plan, as summarized below:

a. The General Plan supports improving pedestrian and bicycle connections from the station to Downtown to encourage transit usage and create a more accessible Downtown.

b. North Main Street/Ygnacio Valley Road Specific Plan encourages the creation of an inviting pedestrian corridor between the Walnut Creek BART station and the Traditional Downtown.

3. Appropriate Density

Locating medium to high density housing near public transit helps create an active, 24-hour environment, meet regional housing needs, and increase the likelihood that residents will use both transit facilities and proposed retail, thus ensuring future transit ridership and retail patronage. The Walnut Creek BART Design Guidelines
urban design vision

walnut creek transit village design guidelines

envision design that accommodates high-quality multi-family housing immediately adjacent to the BART station, within the City’s Core Area, and within walking distance to Downtown Walnut Creek. This goal is consistent with the goals of the Housing Element, Economic Development Plan, and General Plan, summarized as follows:

a. The Design Review Guidelines require new multi-family housing to address design issues such as scale and character, views, building facades, exterior site design and landscaping, building materials, and facilities. (II. Residential Architecture, C. Multiple Family Residential);

b. The 2009-2014 Housing Element encourages higher density residential development in the Core Area, particularly near Downtown, public transit, major thoroughfares, shopping, and employment centers. (Policy 1, Policy 3) The element supports meeting regional housing needs (Policy 22);

c. The Economic Development Plan encourages maintaining a range of affordable housing to meet the needs of the City’s workforce (Policy 4.1). Specifically, it supports mixed-use development surrounding the Walnut Creek BART Station (Policy 9.1); and

d. The General Plan supports locating higher-density residential development in locations that enhance pedestrian access and reduce traffic, are located in the Core Area, and are linked to transit, schools, employment centers and shopping areas (Built Environment: Goals 2, 3, 10, Policy 10.1; Transportation: Policy 7.3).

This development also provides a supply of housing to accommodate Regional Housing Need Allocations mandated by the State of California.
4. Vibrant Mixed-Use

The Transit Village should be developed as a mixed-use Transit Village, predominantly residential in nature with ground floor retail, office, and open space uses. Commercial uses could range from neighborhood-serving to transit-serving retail and office space. In general, neighborhood-serving retail uses should be strategically located adjacent to new Transit Village housing and existing office uses in order to take advantage of the market generated from new residents and existing office workers. Transit-serving retail uses should be located adjacent to BART and CCCTA transit facilities and pedestrian pathways in order to take advantage of the market generated from BART and CCCTA commuters.

5. Well-Defined Public Realm

A well-defined public realm gives structure to the Transit Village and provides a framework that contains and organizes individual developments into a cohesive whole. It also serves as the entry point to the private realm, a “forecourt” to individual buildings and developments.

The public realm will serve the on-site residents as well as a wide variety of visitors to the station, retail areas, residential neighborhoods, and other site amenities. The design of the public realm should anticipate and respond to the various needs that these users will have. Several examples of these user groups and their anticipated needs are summarized below.

Regular BART Commuters
As stated in the General Plan, a major goal for the Transit Village is to function well as a multi-modal transit hub. The needs of the daily commuter are critical to address in meeting this goal. They include signage/wayfinding, convenient parking, site ingress and egress, and siting of amenities around the fare gates.

Regional Visitors
Many station users will continue to be drawn from the regional context to visit local business, restaurants, and downtown shopping opportunities. Similar to regular BART commuters, their needs will focus around the way the station circulates and functions, however the station should also demonstrate a unique identity to Walnut Creek though the design of the public realm.
On-Site Residents
Residents of the Transit Village also are likely to use the station on a regular basis. In addition to those functional requirements, the needs of these residents will include separate vehicular access, private outdoor areas, and secured but convenient pedestrian access to the public realm.

On-Site Retail/Restaurant Patrons
The Transit Village may also be a destination meeting, shopping, or dining place for local residents. The public realm should include defined areas accommodating gathering areas and comfortable spaces for seating which are flexible for a variety uses.

6. Architectural Diversity
Development within the Transit Village should incorporate a diverse range of architectural styles, suitable to the building’s type use and context. No one particular architectural theme is recommended for the Transit Village. Rather, promotion of rigorous, high-quality design and variety is emphasized.

All building facades that are publicly visible should include three-dimensional detailing such as balconies and reveals to cast shadows and create visual interest. Additional elements that may be used to provide visual relief include awnings and projections, trellises, detailed parapets, and arcades. Part III of this document will further describe acceptable building design strategies.

Authentic use of building materials and colors will enhance the attractiveness of the Transit Village. All surface treatments of materials should be integral to the building design and not merely applied to the surface. Design treatments, colors, and materials should be enhanced at side and rear building elevations when exposed to close public view.

7. Public Benefits
Development within the Transit Village should enhance this location’s role as a major gateway into Walnut Creek. The Transit Village should provide safe, high-quality public outdoor spaces and amenities, optimize views to Mt. Diablo, incorporate public art projects and create a friendly and attractive environment to transit users and residents alike.

Figure 1.44: Vision of a Transit Village, view of an active plaza
8. Sustainability

Sustainable development creates short and long-term benefits to the Transit Village and surrounding community. Sustainable development demonstrates a reduction of: (1) waste, (2) stormwater runoff, (3) energy and water requirements for building operation, (4) automobile usage by its occupants, and (5) material and resource requirements for building construction. These and other “green building” practices improve the long-term sustainability of a development and its surrounding community by encouraging sustainable lifestyle choices, minimizing building impacts on the environment and conserving municipal resources. Future development in the Transit Village should embrace sustainable site design and green building practices.

These characteristics are consistent with the goals of the General Plan and Housing Element, summarized below:

- The General Plan promotes “green” redevelopment within the City including resource-efficient building techniques, materials and technologies. (Built Environment: Goal 27, Policy 27.1); and

- The Housing Element encourages the incorporation of energy conservation design features in existing and future residential development. (Policy 18)
SITE PLAN CONCEPT

The urban design framework, generated throughout a series of public workshops, envisions a network of streets and paseos that connect the BART station and future development to the rest of the city, breaks down the scale of development into smaller parcels, and frames views towards Mt. Diablo and the surrounding landscape. The Urban Design Framework also envisions development that promotes attractive living edges throughout the Transit Village, which are oriented to surrounding streets, new streets, public spaces, and other public amenities. Lastly, the design should locate street-oriented ground level uses at key locations throughout the Transit Village. See Figure 1.49 below.
STREET AND BLOCK CONFIGURATION

A network of streets and paseos link the BART station and future development with itself and the surrounding community. The street network includes 1) New Street A (formerly Riviera Avenue), 2) New Street B, a new dual-use street and patron drop-off between the existing parking garage and future residential developments, 3) New Street C between the North Parcel and the BART tracks including a taxi roundabout, and 4) two pedestrian thoroughfares or “paseos” bisecting the North and East Parcels. (See Figure 1.52).

The resulting three parcels range in size from 3 to 4.2 acres each. The North and South parcels sit to the west of the BART tracks, whereas the East parcel sits to the east of the tracks and south of the existing BART parking garage. The North and East Parcels each breaks down further into two smaller “blocks.” These resulting sub-parcels or “blocks” provide a framework for a livable community by (1) improving walkability, (2) breaking down the scale of development to be in harmony with the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood blocks, (3) framing views to Mt. Diablo and defining connections to adjacent streets, and (4) being large enough to accommodate mixed-use development. (See Figure 1.52).
CIRCULATION AND ACCESS STRATEGIES

BART Station Strategy

The Walnut Creek BART Station’s primary entrance is located in the center of the Transit Village. Elevated BART tracks run from the south to the north edges of the site. Two surface parking lots and a multi-story garage are currently situated on the western portion of the site. The power substation is located north of the BART entrance, under the BART tracks. The Walnut Creek BART Station has a total ridership of approximately 12,400 persons per day. BART recently added special trackwork between the Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill/Contra Costa Center Stations to allow trains to cross tracks. This improvement resulted in additional BART seating capacity during peak hours, increased reliability of service in the Walnut Creek-Pleasant Hill area, additional flexibility in operational and delay management, and improved maintenance capacity. The Walnut Creek BART Station has adopted a capacity plan, approved by the BART Board of Directors, which would allow increased ridership in the future. This plan provides emergency exit stairs at the ends of all platforms, new fare gates to the southwest of the existing fare gates and new escalators.

An essential element of a successful transit station is ensuring that all users and service providers can easily gain access to and circulate within the facility. Development of the Transit Village should provide safe and efficient circulation and access for a variety of modes. These characteristics are consistent with the goals of the General Plan, BART’s TOD Policy and TOD Guidelines and CCCTA principles, summarized:

a. The General Plan policies support creating attractive and safe linkages for pedestrian and bicyclist to the Walnut Creek BART Station and surrounding areas;

b. BART TOD policy is aimed at reducing automobile access by enhancing multi-modal access to and from BART station in partnership with communities and access providers;

c. BART’s TOD Guidelines are aimed at enhancing circulation and access through improving customer safety, convenience and system and station operation; and

d. CCCTA principles deal with transit circulation and access issues such as access and egress, bike parking, and bus facility siting.

BART Replacement Parking Strategy

Development should provide an adequate supply of parking, to serve the needs of BART’s customers (current and future) as well as new residential development. Accordingly, this Plan envisions at least a 1:1 replacement parking ratio for the redevelopment of existing surface parking. Alternative parking strategies and technologies for BART users and residents should be encouraged. Subsequent environmental review will include a comprehensive analysis of parking adequacy, location, access, and operations.

BART Station Facility Upgrades

At this time, there is no implementation deadline for BART station enhancements. These guidelines, however, endeavor to provide a backdrop to encourage that any station enhancements create a dignified transit station that works in harmony with the rest of the Transit Village.

It is envisioned that colors should work in agreement with the colors selected for the other structures. Materials should be durable in nature to withstand heavy use and qualify with the operational/maintenance requirements of BART. Material choices do not need to be identical to those of the residential/commercial portions of the project. The distinct difference in use of the facility can justify contrasting materials.

The station upgrades at the Pleasant Hill BART station offer realistic and attractive improvements that can serve as a baseline for any station upgrades to be considered at the Walnut Creek BART facility. These may include any of the following: station platform exterior cleaning
and resurfacing, removal of metal awnings, repainting of metal louver system, increasing natural light at the fare gates, incorporation of new seating elements that are consistent with the surrounding Transit Village and improved way-finding signage.

Bus Intermodal Relocation Strategy

CCCTA provides County Connection bus service to the Transit Village, providing fixed-route (local and express) and paratransit service (LINK) within the City of Walnut Creek. The express fixed-route service runs along Ygnacio Valley Road to the east of the Transit Village and the local fixed-route service runs north-south along North California Boulevard. Currently the CCCTA utilizes the bus terminal located on the eastern portion of the Transit Village, adjacent to the BART entrance. The Plan envisions relocating the bus terminal to the southwest portion of the Transit Village, incorporated within the proposed BART replacement parking structure. The link between BART and connecting transit modes should be direct, short and uninterrupted by other types of vehicular traffic. Relocating the bus terminal to the southwest portion of the Transit Village will situate it immediately adjacent to the BART entrance, improving accessibility for transit users and enhancing the pedestrian environment on the eastern portion of the Transit Village.
**Figure 1.56: Automobile Circulation Strategy**

**Figure 1.57: Pedestrian Circulation Strategy**
Figure 1.58: Bus Circulation Strategy

Figure 1.59: Bicycle Circulation Strategy