OVERVIEW

A Sense of Place

The Walnut Creek Transit Village will continue to be the public transit gateway into the city. Public transit users arriving at the station should experience it as a direct reflection of the Walnut Creek community. For commuters, the Transit Village is a part of daily life; for tourists and shoppers, the beginning of a pleasant excursion. For residents, the Village should be an inviting neighborhood with easy access to downtown and other cities along the BART line. From the Transit Village, North California Boulevard leads into the heart of Downtown Walnut Creek (See Figure 2.1). The downtown shopping district is a regional draw and steady streams of visitors travel between downtown and the BART station. In sum, the public realm is the network of spaces within which the activities of community life take place.

The Walnut Creek Transit Village Design Guidelines for the Public Realm build upon Walnut Creek's unique sense of place, economic vitality, local history, and regional landscape. The Design Guidelines aim to encourage a fresh, vibrant and livable transit-oriented community that is both unique and complementary to its context.

Mt. Diablo is a regional icon and a memorable marker for the city. (See Figure 2.2). Rising up on the city's eastern horizon, it frames Walnut Creek to the east and is a focal point from the BART platform. The mountain's oak trees and golden grassland represent the scenic local terrain (See Figure 2.3).

The public realm is comprised of a network of spaces with complementary function and character. Sidewalks and paseos are the primary areas within and around the Transit Village reserved specifically for pedestrian and bicycle use. They also serve as interfaces between buildings and the private realm by providing both connections into buildings and buffers between them. (See Figures 2.4 and 2.5). The design of sidewalks and paseos are critical to the creation of an active, pedestrian-friendly environment.

Within the Transit Village, plazas and gardens become activity “nodes” that complement active areas in the architecture, help to orient pedestrians, and provide a sense of arrival. Importantly, open plazas and gardens provide Village residents and transit-users areas to recreate. The design of these spaces is vital to providing
a livable community. (See Figure 2.6). The nature and quality of these spaces will vary according to their specific Transit Village locations. However, they all play an important role in visually defining the Transit Village. The design of each plaza and garden space should be carefully considered to complement all others, while also creating a variety of experiences.

Streets provide primary access from the Transit Village to the rest of the city. Some streets provide internal access into future development. Other streets provide pedestrian access, or function as open space amenities. Streets integrate the urban fabric of the Transit Village with that of the surrounding neighborhood.

**GOALS FOR THE PUBLIC REALM:**

- **a. Reinforce the Transit Village as a gateway into downtown Walnut Creek and enhance the Village’s identity as a model of a vibrant downtown.**
- **b. Use landscape features to maintain and complement views of Mt. Diablo, as well as to draw references to the native landscape.**
- **c. Design an attractive and walkable environment by improving pedestrian safety, convenience and comfort.**
- **d. Develop a consistent landscape vocabulary that ties the Village together and establishes a unique site character.**
- **e. Ensure a pedestrian-friendly environment and encourage the use of public transit.** Where grade changes occur, make every effort to keep grades below 5% and thereby avoid pedestrian ramps. Where this is impossible, integrate pedestrian ramps, elevators, or lifts within or directly adjacent to main path of travel. Provide multiple, clear, and direct routes to BART for automobiles, buses, shuttles, bikes, and pedestrians and integrate way-finding elements into the landscape design.
- **f. Provide comfortable and inviting outdoor spaces year round and promote use of a wide range of passive and active open space by Transit Village residents and the general public.**
OVERVIEW, GOALS, AND GUIDELINES
WALNUT CREEK TRANSIT VILLAGE DESIGN GUIDELINES

PUBLIC SPACE DIAGRAM

Figure 2.7: Site Plan of Public Spaces

1. Building 1, proposed BART Parking Garage
2. Building 2, proposed mixed-use development
3. Building 3, proposed mixed-use development
4. Building 4, proposed mixed-use development
5. Building 5, proposed mixed-use development
6. Garage Access
7. BART Garage Access
8. Bus Plaza
9. New Street A
10. New Street B
11. New Street C
12. Mt. Diablo Vista
13. Pringle Passage
14. BART Plaza
15. The Portal
16. The Porch
17. Rain Garden Park
18. Pringle Passage Plaza

A. Existing building
B. Elevated BART Tracks
C. Existing BART Parking Garage
B. PUBLIC SPACES

WALNUT CREEK TRANSIT VILLAGE DESIGN GUIDELINES
YGNACIO VALLEY ROAD STREET FRON TAGE

Site Description

Ygnacio Valley Road is one of the main east/west thoroughfares through Walnut Creek. It is heavily used throughout the day; flows are pronounced especially during rush hour commute times. This major corridor is the southern boundary of the Transit Village and BART station. In its current condition this expanse of asphalt and concrete lacks a coherent landscape treatment that is appropriate for a mixed-use residential environment. (See Figure 2.10).

Goals and Opportunities

a. Unify and improve the visual quality of the Ygnacio Valley Road streetscape. (See Figure 2.11).

b. Create a pedestrian and bike friendly path of travel along Ygnacio Valley Road.

c. Utilize large scale street trees to provide shade and to buffer residential units from the road.

Figure 2.8: Key Plan

Figure 2.9: Plan

Figure: 2.10: View of Ygnacio Valley Road looking East

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY NOTES</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Building 1</td>
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<td>2. BART Plaza</td>
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<td>3. Bus Plaza</td>
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<td>4. Elevated BART Tracks</td>
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<td>5. Building 5</td>
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Goals Specific to The Portal

a. *Create a sense of entry and identity for the Transit Village and the City of Walnut Creek.*

b. *Create a landscape vocabulary specific to the project. This vocabulary should reflect the scale and size of the project and its context.*

c. *Eliminate visual clutter at this important entrance.*

d. *Create a clear path of entry and exit for automobiles, bicyclists and pedestrians. Identify the vehicular entry points to the project.*

e. *Integrate landscape features with existing grades and BART features.*

Design Guidelines

*Ygnacio Valley Road West*

1. Provide a traditional urban streetscape establishing a 10-foot sidewalk minimum and locating street trees in tree grates.

2. Utilize a simple palette of plants and hardscape materials to unify the entire street frontage. (See Figure 2.12).

3. Create a well defined planting edge along the sidewalk and space trees 25 feet on center minimum.

*Ygnacio Valley Road East*

1. In order to create a safer and more pleasant pedestrian experience, elevate the sidewalk from the road grade and separate it from the roadway with a lush landscape buffer.

2. Provide a double row of street trees elevated and set back from the roadway to ensure clearance from truck and bus traffic. A double row will provide shade, and a substantial landscape buffer. (See Figure 2.13).

3. Space trees 35 feet on center minimum.
PUBLIC SPACES

WALNUT CREEK TRANSIT VILLAGE DESIGN GUIDELINES

YGNACIO VALLEY ROAD WEST STREET FRONTAGE

1. Building 1
2. Ornamental Planting
3. Public Sidewalk
4. Existing Tree
5. Retained Planting Area
6. Proposed Street Tree

Well with Grate
7. Street Furniture Zone
8. Existing Crosswalk
9. Existing Office Building

KEY NOTES

YGNACIO VALLEY ROAD EAST STREET FRONTAGE

1. Public Sidewalk, Pedestrians and Bicycles
2. Ornamental Planting
3. Proposed Street Tree
4. Existing Tree
5. Building 5
6. Retaining Wall Terraces
7. Private Patio
8. Existing Building
9. Overlook
10. Podium Garage

KEY NOTES

Figure 2.14: Section A-A

Figure 2.16: Section B-B

Figure 2.15: Enlarged Plan

Figure 2.17: Enlarged Plan
THE PORTAL

Site Description

The Portal is that portion of the site which includes the main vehicular entry and exit point along Ygnacio Valley Road. (Namely, the Ygnacio Valley Road off-ramp from I-680). The Portal serves as a major visual face of the Transit Village and the City of Walnut Creek. On the west, it is framed by the new parking garage (Building 1); on the east by Residential Building 5. The elevated BART tracks bisect the Portal. Especially during commute hours, this intersection will accommodate significant vehicular circulation; vehicles entering and exiting BART, as well as the freeway, and surrounding surface roads.

Design Guidelines

1. Create a simple landscape design statement using architectural and landscape features such as retaining walls, street trees, and large planting groups.

2. Use a series of retaining walls to negotiate the significant grade change in this area. These walls should act as an architectural plinth for the BART Plaza and the buildings behind. In the terraces created by the walls, install rain gardens.

3. Provide a dedicated pedestrian and bike path that leads directly from the street level and sidewalk to the BART Plaza. This path should be wide enough to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle traffic in both directions.

4. To create a visual focal point, integrate a grove of specimen trees at the BART plaza level and the east side of the Portal. These trees will serve as links to the native landscape, and will provide a restful counterpoint to the complexity of the transit center.

Figure 2.18: Section C-C

Figure 2.19: Enlarged Plan

KEY NOTES

1. Building 1
2. Ornamental and Rain Garden Planting
3. Public Sidewalk
4. Proposed Street Tree
5. Building 5
6. Planting Terraces
7. Proposed crosswalk
8. Emergency Vehicle Access
9. Multi-level Parking Garage
10. BART Tracks
11. Vehicular Access
MT. DIABLO VISTA

Site Description

Mt. Diablo Vista serves as a significant axis of visual and physical continuity between the BART platform, the City of Walnut Creek, and the mountain itself. For disembarking BART passengers, Buildings 4 and 5 will visually frame the mountain. From the BART Plaza level, the paseo reaches out to The Porch at North California Boulevard and beyond to downtown. Mt. Diablo Vista is an active corridor marked by numerous public gathering spaces. "Activity" nodes include bike parking and repair facility, retail establishments (at the intersection with BART Plaza), residential common space, and retail/commercial frontage (at the corner of Ygnacio Valley Road).

Goals and Opportunities

a. Frame views of Mt. Diablo.

b. Create an experience that is comfortable and engaging for the visitor.

c. Provide interest and character through the use of site furnishings and paving materials.
d. **Develop a unique identity for the Transit Village with specific design details and character.**

e. **Create a sense of arrival at the entrance to the paseo.**

### Design Guidelines

1. Use landscape features, such as walls, furnishing, and paving patterns, to reinforce the visual axis to Mt. Diablo. Do not block the views to the mountain from above or below. Emphasize the vista by providing a single row of deciduous trees with and open form and upright canopy.

2. Develop a landscape vocabulary and custom landscape features that spans the length of the paseo and respond to the shape of the space. Such a feature might include a combination of planting and built-in seating.

3. To reinforce active uses at the ground floor, delineate a small plaza space distinguished by a change in paving materials at the end of the paseo, directly above The Porch. (See Figure 2.25).

4. In the layout and detailing of planter, establish “niches” in the landscape to be physical spaces for pause or small gatherings.

5. Provide an informal “gateway” where the paseo originates at the BART Plaza. Tie this element conceptually to the experience of the train arrival; for example, a fog fountain that emits fog when trains arrive or disembark. This element should not block views to Mt. Diablo.

6. Provide a signature water feature that links the Paseo to the North California/Ygnacio Valley Road intersection. This feature should be readily visible from outside the project and allow for adequate pedestrian access.

7. Provide outdoor seating in locations that are buffered from the roadway, have access to views, and are energized by activity along the paseo.

8. Provide sections of landscape buffer between the main pedestrian corridor and building facades.

9. Sufficient space should be allowed for proper design and functionality of proposed design elements.
THE PORCH

Site Description

The Porch is the terminus of Mt. Diablo Vista. It sits at the intersection of Ygnacio Valley Road and North California Boulevard. This important location makes the Porch a highly visible aspect of the Transit Village, and a major collection point for pedestrians moving to and from BART and downtown. The public space enjoys full sun exposure and a view of Mt. Diablo. The Village sits nearly 10 feet above the street corner. The change in grade requires stairs and a ramp.
Goals and Opportunities

a. Establish a unique visual presence at this important corner.

b. Create an efficient pedestrian and bike connection between the BART station and the Transit Village.

c. Make the transition from the street grade to Mt. Diablo Vista a pleasant experience for transit users and residents.

Design Guidelines

1. Provide a water feature to establish an inviting entrance to the Transit Village. A fountain could: (1) take advantage of the significant grade change in this area, and (2) make a physical link between the Mt. Diablo Vista and the Porch. White noise created by the fountain would mitigate street noise from North California Boulevard. (See Figure 2.29).

2. To provide a dramatic entrance to the project and to make a comfortable transition between the street grade and Mt. Diablo Vista, create a grand stairway with generous landings. A stairway would also provide informal places for people to meet, sit, and to gather. (See Figures 2.30 and 2.31).

3. Provide an ADA accessible ramp to the public realm, sculpturally integrated with the overall Porch design.

4. Use built-in planters to provide accent planting along the grand stairs, and along retail frontage. (See Figure 2.31).
NORTH CALIFORNIA STREET FRONTAGE

Site Description

North California Boulevard serves the office developments located to the east and north of the Transit Village and is a direct route to downtown Walnut Creek. This street is generally quiet after the evening rush hour. (See Figure 2.34). Street frontage character of the street frontage will vary according to adjacent project uses, including the Porch, private stoops, Rain Garden Park, and the plaza space at its intersection with Pringle Avenue.

The corner of Pringle Avenue and North California Boulevard is an important pedestrian connection between the BART station and office developments to the north. During commute hours, the intersection is bustling. The landscape should support the easy flow of pedestrians, as well as provide an outdoor area suitable for congregating. To maintain visibility for pedestrians and retail signage, street trees may not be suitable at this location.
Goals and Opportunities

a. Maintain North California Boulevard as a major vehicular and pedestrian link to downtown Walnut Creek.

b. Develop an important landscape feature at or near to the corner of Ygnacio Valley Road that functions as a project landmark.

c. Develop a residential street frontage alongside Building 3.

d. Ensure that the Pringle Avenue corner plaza is highly active and pedestrian friendly. Create an environment suitable for congregating outdoors.

e. Maintain the easy flow of pedestrians to and from the BART station and across Pringle Avenue.

Design Guidelines

1. Provide 10 foot minimum sidewalk width with street trees situated in tree grates at 25 feet on center. (See Figure 2.35).

2. Provide landscaped bulb-outs at key locations to shorten cross-walk distance for pedestrians. (See Figure 2.36).

3. Utilize a change in paving material and/or pattern to highlight the corner at North California and Pringle Avenue.

4. Provide unique light bollards or a similar architectural element at the corner of North California and Pringle Avenue to define the street edge without blocking views of building and pedestrians.
**PUBLIC SPACES**

**WALNUT CREEK TRANSIT VILLAGE DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**BUILDING 4 STREET FRONTAGE**

**KEY NOTES**

1. Public Sidewalk
2. Private Porch
3. Proposed Street Tree
4. Building 4
5. Ornamental Planting
6. Garage Entry
7. Proposed Mid-Block Crossing
8. Street Furniture Zone
9. Existing Building
10. Subterranean Garage
11. Existing Tree

**BUILDING 3 STREET FRONTAGE**

**KEY NOTES**

1. Public Sidewalk
2. Private Stoop
3. Building 3
4. Proposed Street Tree
5. Rain Garden Park
6. Corner Plaza
7. Elevated BART Tracks
8. Garden Path
9. Existing Building
RAIN GARDEN PARK

Figure 2.42: Section H-H

Figure 2.43: Enlarged Plan

Site Description

Rain Garden Park is an open space situated along North California Boulevard. Triangular in shape, this space is adjacent to many other parts of the project, including the BART Plaza to the south. The area is traversed by numerous automobile routes, including: (1) the main auto entry into the Building 4 garage, (2) the Emergency Vehicle Access (EVA) lane, (3) New Street C, and (4) the taxi staging area. The BART tracks are located directly overhead. As a natural low point in site elevation, it is well-suited to treat much of the project’s storm water run-off.

Goals and Opportunities

a. Create a green park setting fronting Building 3.

b. Create usable, passive open space for the general public and building residents.

c. Treat storm water run-off in a visible way and utilize plant species as bio-filters.

d. Provide a direct pedestrian route between the BART Plaza and Pringle Ave.

Design Guidelines

1. Define the park by a single landscape gesture. This gesture should succeed in unifying the area’s variable edge conditions. (See Figure 2.37).

2. Use lines of trees along the BART tracks to enhance park visibility for BART riders, and to screen the BART tracks from Building 3.

3. On North California, create a pedestrian connection to the adjacent mid-block crossing. Throughout the park, provide walking paths based on desired sight lines and cross-walk location. Along the paths, provide benches at strategic points.
PRINGLE AVENUE

Site Description

Upon completion of the Transit Village, Pringle Avenue will function as an important commercial and residential street. The Transit Village’s proposed retail and residential frontage will complement the commercial office and flex spaces situated along the north side of Pringle Avenue. Pringle Avenue is a major vehicular access point for BART commuters, New Street B traffic, and the Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (CCCTA) vehicles.

As noted above, (see section on North California Boulevard), the corner of Pringle Avenue and North California Boulevard is an important pedestrian connection between the BART station and office developments to the north. During commute hours, it is a bustling intersection. The landscape should support the easy flow of pedestrians, as well as provide an outdoor area suitable for a restaurant, retail or community use. Species and spacing of street trees at this corner location should be selected and designed for maximum visibility for pedestrians and retail signage.
Goals and Opportunities

- **a.** At the corner of North California Boulevard and Pringle Avenue, establish a clear entry point at the Building 2 and 3 lobby/leasing office and the corner retail parking areas.

- **b.** Complement the existing streetscape on the north side of Pringle Avenue.

- **c.** Create a comfortable pedestrian experience.

- **d.** Maintain the easy flow of pedestrians to and from the BART station and across Pringle Avenue.

- **e.** Create an environment suitable for outdoor enjoyment.

Design Guidelines

1. Design a small plaza at the corner of Pringle Avenue that provides space for outdoor seating. The plaza should provide an obvious visual connection to the areas located to the north. To designate this area as an important pedestrian node, incorporate landscape features such as accent light columns or enhanced paving. A unique light bollard or a similar architectural element would help to define the street edge without blocking views. (See Figure 2.48).

2. At the Pringle Passage stairway, utilize strategies such as variable paving colors, patterns, and detailing, as well as bollards, to define the pedestrian zone at the garage entry. (See Figure 2.48).

3. Provide a planting strip along the street with street trees and understory planting to create an appropriate pedestrian buffer adjacent to the busy vehicular street. (See Figure 2.49).

4. Grade the site to allow the retail finish floor to be at the street level on the corner of Pringle and North California.
PRINGLE PASSAGE STREET FRONTAGE

PRINGLE PASSAGE ENTRY

Site Description

Pringle Passage is the pedestrian connection between the BART Plaza and Pringle Avenue. It is framed by Buildings 2 and 3 and is envisioned as residential in character. A broad stairway leads from the Paseo level to Pringle Avenue, below. Associated ADA access may be integrated into the architecture, and should be designed to echo the overall character of the public realm. Secured breezeways leading into the courtyard areas of the residential buildings will help to activate this pedestrian space.

Figure 2.50: Key Plan

Figure 2.51a: Section K2-K2, not to scale

Figure 2.51: Section K1-K1

Figure 2.52: Enlarged Plan

1. Public Sidewalk
2. Building 2
3. Building 3
4. Pringle Passage
5. Private Patio
6. Proposed Street Tree
7. Garage Entry
8. Building Lobby
9. Public Stair
10. Pringle Passage Plaza
11. Secured Access to Private Courtyards
12. Ornamental Planting in Raised Planter
13. Bike Lane
14. Podium Garage
15. Planting Area
Goals and Opportunities

a. Create an active pedestrian environment and define the Paseo as an informal neighborhood open space.

b. Using site furniture, planting and lighting, emphasize and enhance the pedestrian experience between the BART Plaza and Pringle Avenue.

Design Guidelines

1. Provide stoops and patios in order to increase pedestrian activity along the Paseo. (See Figure 2.53).

2. Create a vertical pedestrian connection to Pringle Avenue by integrating a grand public staircase. Consider flaring the stairway to create an inviting, clear path of pedestrian travel. (See Figure 2.54).

3. Create a pedestrian promenade by using trees, raised planters, and screen walls flanking the walkway. Use these same elements to provide separation and privacy to the residential units. (See Figure 2.55).
PRINGLE PASSAGE PLAZA

Site Description

Pringle Passage Plaza lies at the south end of Pringle Passage, the pedestrian connection between the BART Plaza and Pringle Avenue. A publically accessible private space, the Plaza should provide for resident needs, as well as offer a space for informal public and private gatherings. The design should include a landscape feature that is visible from New Street C to help identify this space as publically accessible, and to draw pedestrians to Pringle Passage. Movable furniture will further this goal. While an active plaza is desirable, it is also necessary to screen residential units to define private entries.
Goals and Opportunities

a. Provide a focal point to welcome pedestrians to the Plaza and Pringle Passage.

Design Guidelines

1. Use a raised planter to provide public seating and privacy to residential units. Add trees for a landscape focal point.

2. To define the plaza area, use enhanced paving, such as precast pavers in a contrasting color. Use plant material and site furnishings to define informal gathering spaces. (See Figure 2.59).

3. Provide comfortable, custom seating built into planter walls. (See Figure 2.60).

4. Provide space for movable furniture associated with adjacent retail. (See Figures 2.61 and 2.61a).

5. Sufficient space should be allowed for proper design and functionality of proposed design elements.
NEW STREET A

Site Description

New Street A, a privately owned but publicly accessible easement, enters the site from the north and is an important part of the project interior circulation. It is a major entry point for bus, automobile, and bicycle traffic heading to the Bus Plaza, parking structures, and bike parking respectively. New Street A’s northern end begins at the realigned intersection of Pringle and Riviera and terminates south at Ygnacio Valley Road.
Goals and Opportunities

a. Provide clear and safe travel routes for bicyclists and pedestrians.

b. Buffer the Transit Village from Hwy-680.

c. Preserve and protect existing trees.

Design Guidelines

1. Provide dedicated bike lanes in and out of the BART station and make safe connections to off-site bike path and lanes.

2. At Pringle Avenue, realign corners to decrease crosswalk distances.

3. Maintain the existing redwood grove. The existing redwoods, other trees, and large shrubs provide a living screen between the project site and the elevated freeway. Along the freeway, install additional redwoods and other native and adapted plants. (See Figures 2.65, 2.66, and 2.67).

4. Preserve and protect existing oak trees. These specimen quality trees are highly valued by the city and residents.
NEW STREET B/NEW STREET C

Site Description

New Street B, a street and loading zone, is designated for drop-off and pick-up of BART patrons. It is sited between the existing parking structure and Building 2. New Street C is the extension of New Street B through Rain Garden Park to North California Boulevard. As the major pick-up and drop-off corridor for the BART station and a second egress to the existing parking structure, these two streets (in conjunction with New Street A), will support significant vehicular circulation during the rush hour periods. New Street C also provides access and staging for taxis. A taxi queue is located at the northern edge of the BART Plaza.
Goals and Opportunities

a. Create a dual-purpose street, serving both commuters and the Building 2 residential community.

b. Create a pedestrian-friendly experience along the sidewalks, at drop off zones, and in plaza areas.

c. Develop landscape appropriate to the row houses situated along the north side of the street.

d. Soften the impact and scale of the existing parking garage through planting and site furnishings.

Design Guidelines

1. Use paving materials and patterns to designate different zones in the street section. Colored concrete paving in the drive aisles, permeable pavers in the parking aisles, and colored concrete with a unique score pattern along the sidewalk will transform the street from a busy New Street B to a pleasant pedestrian promenade during non-commute hours. (See Figure 2.71).

2. On both sides of the street, provide canopy trees at 25 feet on center minimum. Provide a third row of trees on the north side of the street, triangulated behind the first. A double row of trees will buffer the residential building and provide shade to the sidewalk and building units.

3. Diminish the impact of the existing parking structure by installing on the building face green screen structures and vines.

4. Provide private stoops overlooking the public realm. Use ornamental planting at stoops to develop a residential neighborhood character. Architectural features should help to define private space and to provide visual interest at the pedestrian scale. (See Figure 2.73).
BART PLAZA

Site Description

The BART Plaza is the heart of the Transit Village. The Plaza runs north-south from the Rain Garden Park to the project’s edge at the Portal. Included are portions of the New Street B road and the New Street C’s taxi roundabout. On the west, the Plaza is bracketed by the Bus Plaza and the proposed and existing parking structures. On the east, it is bounded by Residential Buildings 4 and 5. The plaza includes the fare gate entry points and encompasses the area between the BART tracks and the surrounding buildings. Emergency vehicle access (EVA) must be provided to the length of the BART platform. A 20 foot wide paved zone on both sides of the platform, free of obstructions, will provide this necessary access. As the origin of the Transit Village and its physical center, the articulation of the plaza and its relationship to the surrounding features is of the utmost importance to the landscape design.
Goals and Opportunities

a. Create a vibrant space for commuters, commercial users, and future residents.

b. Unify and organize the various areas of the plaza through a coherent ground plane.

c. Unite the BART station with the context of the Transit Village.

Design Guidelines

1. Consider activating the retail area fronting the Plaza with a water feature. This feature could be linked to the BART train schedule and activated upon the arrival of trains. Alternatively, in the evening and during the winter months, the feature could be illuminated on the same schedule. (See Figure 2.77).

2. Provide seating elements at gathering places along the BART Plaza, especially near retail and service establishments.

3. Per BART standards, provide a “carpet” of pavement that defines the extent of the Plaza boundaries. Pavers would assist in (1) emphasizing the pedestrian nature of the Plaza, (2) providing a pleasing visual texture, and (3) integrating with the landscape and architectural features of the city of Walnut Creek. Paving should be durable and include areas of permeability. The paving at the taxi drop-off area should be consistent with the Plaza, to visually extend the public space and to highlight the pedestrian nature of the area. Use bollards to demarcate vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

4. Use narrow, upright trees along the BART track corridor to enhance the pedestrian experience and provide seasonal change, while avoiding conflicts with the overhead tracks. (See Figure 2.78).

5. In concert with permeable paving, use planting areas to collect and treat storm water runoff. (See Figure 2.79).

6. Use a combination of vines and shrubs to screen utility areas. Maintain access as necessary.
THE BUS PLAZA

Site Description

The Bus Plaza is the designated bus staging and loading area located on the ground floor of the proposed replacement BART parking garage. The space occupies most of Building 1’s footprint area and functions as the primary transition point for BART riders, local commuters, and CCCTA services. The Bus Plaza is bounded on the west by elevated Interstate 680; to the north by the existing BART parking structure. The bike connector from New Street A runs along the north side of the plaza between the proposed and existing parking garages. Most of the plaza is covered by the proposed garage structure.

Goals and Opportunities

a. Use signage and other landscape features to announce the various transportation modes that converge at the Transit Village.

b. Create clear way finding for all transit users. Enhance bike routes to clearly delineate path of travel from the project exterior’s bicycle parking areas.
Goals and Opportunities continued

c. Design spaces so that large numbers of pedestrians can circulate freely in all directions.

d. Soften the scale effects of the garage structure and buses.

e. Leverage the parking structure’s weather protective features to create pleasant places for bus users.

f. Create a well-lit plaza using a comprehensive lighting scheme.

Design Guidelines

1. Utilize landscape features, signage, paving, and other elements to contribute to a sense of arrival, and to celebrate the plaza’s modes of available transportation. Additionally, these design elements should humanize the scale of the garage structure. (See Figure 2.83).

2. Use enhanced pedestrian pavers to enhance plaza texture and color, as well as to promote way finding and the identification of major activity nodes and destinations. (See Figure 2.84).

3. Create a rain garden within the plaza. A rain garden will soften the new garage structure’s scale and will also provide a natural filtration system for the structure’s rain water runoff. Rain could be diverted to the plaza level via rain water leaders, rain chains and/or scuppers. (See Figure 2.85).

4. To provide a human scale element to the narrow space between the existing parking structure and the Bus Plaza, provide a formal row of canopy trees along the north side of the Bus Plaza and in front of the existing parking garage. To create a canopy effect, 25 feet minimum on center tree spacing is recommended. Canopy trees complemented by an understory of shrubs would separate bike lanes flowing in opposite directions.
C. GENERAL DESIGN CRITERIA

WALNUT CREEK TRANSIT VILLAGE DESIGN GUIDELINES
LANDSCAPE/HARDSCAPE MATERIALS

Hardscape materials

ADA compliant hardscape materials should be durable, refined, and consistent throughout the project site. All concrete should be sandblast finished and slip resistant.

Design Guidelines

1. Pedestrian/vehicular areas: Pervious pavers should be used in pedestrian/vehicular areas, such as the BART plaza and taxi drop-off area at New Street C. Paver patterns and colors should be contemporary, unique to the project, visually stimulating, and function to delineate plaza edges.

2. Parking areas: Where possible, pervious pavers should be used in parking zones, such as those located along New Street B.

3. Public sidewalks: Concrete paving which meets City of Walnut Creek standards and details should be provided for all public sidewalks. Public sidewalk areas incorporated into adjacent plaza or other paved area design should echo the detailing of these areas.

4. Podium areas: Public walk-ways and plazas over structured parking should be either (1) stone pavers, (2) integrally colored concrete, (3) wood decking, or (4) other appropriate accent paving. Accent paving materials should be located to enhance and define plazas, gathering places, and special features of the landscape design.

5. Significant corners: Special paving materials or finishes should be used to define and enhance the project’s corners at (1) Ygnacio Valley Road and North California Boulevard, and (2) North California Boulevard and Pringle Avenue. Special paving includes but is not limited to: integrally colored concrete with a unique score pattern, concrete pavers, and stone pavers.
Plant palette

Plants should be locally adapted or species deemed appropriate by City of Walnut Creek standards. Drought tolerant species are encouraged. Plants exhibiting high water needs should be used sparingly, and as dictated by microclimate conditions or special circumstances.

Design Guidelines

Trees

1. Throughout the project, street trees should be used consistently with each street delineated by a unique species. Species should be of large stature and suitable for urban conditions.

2. Signature trees should be planted at the Portal to make an entry statement and to function in part as the project’s signature. The California Valley Oak, *Quercus lobata*, is a recommended signature species.

3. Trees located on concrete podiums should be suitable for growth within containers. Species should be deciduous, so as to provide shade in the summer and light penetration in the winter. The honey locust, *Gleditsia triacanthos*, is an especially recommended species for Mt. Diablo Vista.

Shrubs and Grasses

4. Street buffer plants should be suitable for urban conditions and should not require shearing. Mature plant heights should range between 18 inches and 36 inches. Plants adjacent to pedestrian crossings should be no higher than 18 inches.

5. Accent Plantings should be incorporated throughout the project. The palette should include both evergreens and plants of seasonal change.

6. Plants at private patios, stoops, and porches should provide a measure of privacy to these private spaces. Where space permits, plants of various heights should be tiered and should include a variety of color and texture.

7. Rain gardens should be incorporated throughout the project. Species in these gardens should be suitable for periodic rainwater inundation.
SITE FURNISHINGS

Site furnishings will play an important role in defining the character of the Transit Village. The furnishings palette should be consistent and complement the architecture. All furnishings should be contemporary, durable, appropriate to the character of the city, and harmonize with surrounding hardscape and architectural materials.

Design Guidelines

1. Site furnishings include all light poles and fixtures, benches, trash and recycling receptacles, ash receptacles, planting containers, bollards, and bike racks.

2. A mix of materials, such as steel, wood, and refined industrial details, should be incorporated to reflect the urban nature of the Transit Village and to complement the classic landscape furnishings of downtown Walnut Creek.

3. Custom seating should be provided throughout the project as an integral element of the landscape design; for example, in seat walls and planter walls.

4. Seating and other furnishings should be comfortable, and inviting to the public.

5. A portion of the seating in all areas should provide seat backs and armrests.
LIGHTING

The lighting design should be an integral part of the landscape and building plans. Lighting should be used in several ways, first, to provide safety and comfort; second, as a part of the palette of furnishings that animate the pedestrian zone; third, to highlight special features and building entries; and fourth, as a way finding device throughout the Transit Village. Lighting should also be considered when developing public art. Fixtures should be consistent with the architecture and the character of the existing BART structures.

Design Guidelines

1. Light features should provide pedestrian scale architectural elements, express the site character, contribute to way finding, and ensure safety and comfort. Lighting should be consistent with the family of site furnishings, see items a and b under “Site Furnishing”. While being contemporary in style, poles and fixtures should also be complementary to traditional lights as found in downtown Walnut Creek.

2. Lighting of the public spaces should maintain uniform light levels along the streets per City standards, BART plaza areas per BART standards, and all other public open space per the minimum standards of the City of Walnut Creek.

3. Lighting should be energy efficient.

4. Lights installed during phase 2 and 3 of the project should respond to any precedents set in phase 1 and 2.

5. Up lighting should be kept to a minimum to reduce the amount of light pollution for the night sky and Transit Village residents.
GENERAL DESIGN CRITERIA

WALNUT CREEK TRANSIT VILLAGE DESIGN GUIDELINES

SIGNAGE/WAY-FINDING

General Wayfinding Concepts

Wayfinding signage is a critical part of navigating within any urban community; as public transit centers, BART stations require well-designed wayfinding signage. Tenant signage is equally critical to urban communities desiring effective communication about the businesses and services offered within that community.

Effective signs contribute to a community’s visual image by communicating basic information about goods and services offered, and also by communicating something about the quality of that community’s businesses. In conjunction with other visual elements of a community’s environment, signs play a major role in shaping people’s perceptions of a community’s image. Well-designed signs that communicate their messages clearly without attempting to compete for attention will help to create an informative and evocative visual environment along BART’s Transit Village corridor.

The following guidelines have been developed in order to enhance the quality of experiences of all Walnut Creek BART Transit Village users, including bus and train riders, commercial tenants, their customers, and Village residents. The guidelines address signage design, construction and placement, and highlight recommended techniques for ensuring high-quality tenant and wayfinding signage.
Design Guidelines

1. Signage should be decorative, yet clear and intuitive.

2. Signage should be integrated with the landscape design. For example, Signs might be mounted against walls and backlit.

3. Signs must have compatibility with the surrounding. This means signage should ensure simplified navigation from the Transit hub into the adjacent community without distracting the pedestrian experience.

4. It is essential that signs are created in a “human scale” that is neither overwhelming nor under-impactful to the pedestrian experience. Accommodations should be made for vehicular signs to be represented in the appropriate scale.

5. All signs should blend thematically with the architecture and enhance the Transit Village as a whole with consistency. The color palette, typography, materials and design motif should be a visual family, in order to create a unified look for the Transit Village.

6. Quality materials, substrates, paint and vinyl must be used for various signage components that are both free of fading, and graffiti resistant.

Unacceptable Signs

- Overly complicated color schemes
- Exposed neon signs
- Illuminated cabinet signs
- Plastic or flimsy temporary sidewalk signs
- Changeable free-standing signs
- Seasonal or temporary window graphics
- Paper and disposable signs
Wayfinding Sign Types

Design Guidelines

1. Sculptural architectural boundary markers for Transit Village may or may not include the project name, logo, or emblem. (See Figure 2.118).

2. Freestanding pedestrian-scale informational directories will provide essential wayfinding and tenant information. (See Figure 2.119).

3. Vehicular navigational markers should be visible to vehicular traffic, for easy navigation throughout the Walnut Creek Transit Village. (See Figure 2.120). 

4. Pedestrian navigational markers should be visible to pedestrians and bicycle riders to aid navigation throughout the Walnut Creek Transit Village. (See Figure 1.121).

5. Changeable wall banners are project-branded or tenant advertising opportunities that support project...
theming and activate pedestrian space with messaging, imagery, or color. (See Figure 1.122).

6. Wall mounted parking signs at the Portal’s garage entry should be labeled. (See Figure 2.123).

7. Changeable light post banners are project-branded or community-based event advertising opportunities that support project theming and activate space at a vehicular scale. (See Figure 2.124).

8. Street sign directionals are appropriately themed with decorative elements that match project branding. (See Figure 2.125).

9. Parking Restrictions/Occupancy/Informational signs are appropriately labeled and display a digital count of available parking spaces. (See Figure 2.126).

Retail Signage

Design Guidelines

1. With regards to illumination, External lighting fixtures are preferred. (See Figure 2.127). Also preferred are lighting fixtures supported on a building’s facade that cast light on the signs and/or a portion of the building face. (See Figure 2.128). External lighting should emphasize continuity between the building’s surface and signage, so that the signage appears to be an integral element of the building’s facade.

2. In appearance and size, light fixtures used for externally-illuminated signs should be simple and unobtrusive. Fixtures should not obscure sign graphics.

3. Neon back-lighted signs with opaque, reverse channel letters, neon back-lighted signs with dimensional plexiglas letters, and signs with illuminated open-face, channel letters are all appropriate forms of illuminated signs. Exposed neon tubing script is not acceptable.

3. Sign materials should be compatible with the design of the facade on which they are mounted. Materials should be selected in consideration of and complementary to a building facade’s architectural design. The selected materials should also promote signage legibility. For example, glossy finishes are often difficult to read because of glare and reflections.
Permissible Retail Sign Types

Awning and Canopy Signs:
Awnings should be mounted in locations that respect the building's design, including the arrangement of bays and openings. Awnings should not obscure transom windows, grillexwork, piers, pilasters, and other ornamental features. In openings with transoms, the awnings should be mounted below the transom on the horizontal framing element separating the storefront window from the transom.

Wall Signs:
Wall signs are to be mounted flush, fixed securely to a building wall and not extending sideways beyond the building face or above the highest line of the building to which it is attached. Wall signs should be mounted in locations that respect the building's design, including the arrangement of bays and openings. Signs should not obscure windows, grillexwork, piers, pilasters, and ornamental features.

Projected Signs, Marquee Signs and Shingle Signs:
Projected signs are to be perpendicularly affixed to building or structure faces. Projecting signs are strongly encouraged.

In multi-storied buildings, projecting signs should not be mounted above the second floor window-sill. Sign design should incorporate visually interesting elements such as (1) square or rectangular shapes with painted or applied letters, two-or-three dimensional symbols or icons, (3) irregular outlines, and (4) internal cut-outs. Projecting signs should be small in scale and provide a vertical clearance of at least 8 feet along pedestrian areas.

Plaque Signs:
Small versions of wall signs, plaque signs are attached to surfaces adjacent to shop front entries. Plaque signs should be located only on wall surfaces adjacent to tenant entries. Plaque signs are encouraged to incorporate unique designs or other visually stimulating decorations and may be irregular in outline shape.
Window Signs:
Window signs are painted, posted, displayed, or etched on an interior translucent or transparent surface, including windows or doors. These signs generally contain only text; however, in some circumstances window signs can express a business personality using graphic logos, or images combined with color.

Window signs should be applied directly to the interior face of the glazing or hung inside the window thereby concealing all mounting hardware and equipment.

Prohibited Retail Sign Types

Cabinet (Can) Signs:
Internally illuminated cabinet signs are not allowed. This type of sign can disrupt the continuity of the architectural facade.

Hand-painted Window Signs:
Hand-painted window signs are not permitted as results can typically be unsatisfactory and amateurish in appearance.

Low Profile or Monument Signs:
These freestanding signs incorporate a lower height configuration. Such signs are usually used for building complexes separated from adjacent streets by substantial setbacks.
Key Signage Features

KEY NOTES

1. Parapet Mounted Signs provide a dimensional look and allow letters to be freestanding.

2. Awning and canopy signs blend well with the store facade and are typically silk-screened.

3. Wall Sign sand projected signs provide a secure connection with architectural harmony.

4. Outdoor Banners: produced of high quality fabric or vinyl, UV protected.

5. Wall Mounted Signage: well positioned closed face illuminated signage.

KEY NOTES

1. Outdoor Banners: produced of high quality fabric or vinyl; UV protected.

2. Parapet Mounted Signage: well positioned closed face illuminated signage.

3. Window Graphics: well positioned, advertising use on upper windows for brand reinforcement.

4. Shingle Signage: minimum clearance of 8 feet.

5. Plaque Signage: mounted flush to wall; does not exceed 2 inches in depth.

PUBLIC ART

There are many opportunities for displaying public art in the Transit Village. When possible, art elements should be imagined as an integral part of or in tandem with the landscape design. An example of this concept: designing unique lighting features that aid in way finding.

Design Guidelines

1. All proposed public art will meet the requirements of the City of Walnut Creek’s Art Commission.

2. Wall mounted or freestanding art pieces should be well integrated with the architecture and landscape.

3. Inspiration for artistic themes might be found in the public transit art existing on-site.
GENERAL DESIGN CRITERIA

PART TWO

FINAL 02/20/13

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Sustainability is embedded in all aspects of public realm and open space design. It is intended to guide the design, implementation, and approach to quality placemaking for the Walnut Creek Transit Village.

Energy conservation, materials conservation, cost recovery, and waste minimization are aspects of sustainability that should be considered in public realm and open space design and implementation. Throughout the Transit Village, sustainability principles should be prominently showcased and integrated.

Design Guidelines

1. To promote water conservation through the reduction of irrigation demand, plants will be primarily drought tolerant and adapted species. Plants with higher water needs will be used sparingly, and as dictated by microclimate conditions or special circumstances.

2. Planting and irrigation designs and specifications will follow AB 1881 and Bay Friendly Guidelines for water conservation and the reduction of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides.

3. The irrigation system will utilize drip emitters and a weather-sensitive controller with rain and flow sensors.

4. To reduce storm water runoff, areas of non-permeable surfacing will be minimized to the extent possible.

5. To filter storm water runoff, particulate matter should be captured upstream of the storm drain system. To promote infiltration to ground water, rain gardens will be provided throughout the site.

6. To reduce the urban heat island effect, the increase in ambient temperatures in urban areas, paving finishes should be rated with a high reflectance value.

7. Local and recycled materials will be used to the extent feasible.