C. GENERAL DESIGN CRITERIA

WALNUT CREEK TRANSIT VILLAGE DESIGN GUIDELINES
LANDSCAPE/HARDSCAPE MATERIALS

Hardscape materials

Hardscape materials will be ADA compliant, and should be durable, refined, and consistent throughout the project site. Concrete should have a sandblast finish and be slip resistant.

Design Recommendations

1. **Pedestrian/vehicular areas:** Pervious pavers should be used in pedestrian/vehicular areas, such as the BART plaza and taxi drop-off. The pattern and color of pavers should be contemporary and unique to the project, provide interest, and delineate plaza edges.

2. **Parking areas:** Pervious pavers should be used where possible in parking zones, such as the New Street B.

3. **Public sidewalk:** Concrete paving meeting the standards and details of Walnut Creek should be provided for all public sidewalks. Public sidewalk areas that are incorporated into the design of adjacent plazas or other paved areas should take on the detailing of these areas.

4. **Podium areas:** Public walk-ways and plazas on podium should be concrete or stone pavers, integrally colored concrete, wood decking, or other appropriate accent paving. Accent paving materials should be located to enhance and define plazas, gathering places, and special features in the landscape design.

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

Plants should be locally adapted or appropriate species. Drought tolerant species are encouraged. Plants with higher water needs should be used sparingly according to microclimate conditions and special circumstances.

Design Recommendations

Trees
1. Street trees should be used consistently throughout the project, with each street having a unique species. Species should be of large stature and suitable for urban conditions.

2. Signature trees should be provided at the Portal as an entry statement and project signature. The California Valley Oak, Quercus lobata, is a suitable species.

3. Trees located on podium 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 suitable species for Mt. Diablo Vista.

Shrubs and Grasses
4. Street buffer plants should be suitable for urban conditions. They should not require shearing. Mature plant heights should range between 18” and 36”. Height of plants adjacent to pedestrian crossings should be no more than 18”.

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

6. Plants at private patios, stoops, and porches should provide some measure of privacy to the private spaces. Where space permits, plants of a variety of heights should be included in tiered planting, including a variety of color and texture.

7. Rain gardens should be incorporated throughout the project. Species in these locations 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 palette of furnishings should be consistent and complementary to the architecture. All furnishings should be contemporary, durable, and appropriate for the character of the city, as well as harmonize with surrounding hardscape and architectural materials.

Design Recommendations

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 and wood, as well as refined industrial details, should be used to reflect the urban nature of the Transit Village and complement the classic landscape furnishings of downtown Walnut Creek.

3. Custom seating should be provided throughout the project as an integral part 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 Recommendations

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.
SIGNAGE/WAY-FINDING

Introduction

Wayfinding signage is a critical part of navigating within a community and is no exception for the BART transit station communities. Tenant signage is equally critical for successful communication of businesses and services offered within a community. Signs not only communicate information about the goods or services being offered at a particular establishment, they also communicate something about the quality of the particular business and they contribute to the visual image of the City as a whole. Taken together with other visual elements in the City’s environment, signs play a major role in how people perceive the City’s image. Well-designed signs that communicate their message clearly, without attempting to compete for attention will help maintain a quality visual environment along BART’s Transit Village corridor.

These guidelines have been developed to enhance and uphold the quality of experience for visitors, tenants and residents of the Walnut Creek Bart Transit Village development. The intent is to provide guidance in the way signs are designed, constructed, and placed. Guidelines are intended to provide good examples of techniques that should be used in order to meet the communities expectations for quality business and navigational signage.

Design Recommendations

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.

Figure 2.118: Key Identification Markers / Portals (example)

Figure 2.119: Informational Directories (example)
Guidelines for Wayfinding Signage

Compatibility with surrounding:
The Wayfinding Signage for the Walnut Creek BART Transit Village should be designed in such a way that navigation from the Transit hub and through the community is simplified. Visitors will have a clear understanding as they exit the Terminal on the location specific key elements that will strengthen the pedestrian “walkable” experience effort within the region. These key elements indicated will include public parks, points of interest, restaurants, transit connections and retail tenants.

The wayfinding program created for this project should be “human scale.” The signs blend thematically with the architecture and enhance the development as a whole. The materials used are of high quality and durability. The color palette, typography and design motif is consistent creating a unified look for the Transit Village. A wayfinding design styleguide should be created to ensure that the signage design fits within the style of the project architecture.

Wayfinding Sign Types

2.118 Key Identification Markers / Portals
Indicate as sculptural architectural boundary markers to visitors. May or may not include the project name, logo or emblem for branding purposes.

2.119 Informational Directories
Freestanding pedestrian scale directories that provide essential wayfinding and map information.

2.120 Navigational Markers (Vehicular Scale)
Wayfinding signs that are visible for vehicular traffic to navigate throughout WC BART district.

2.121 Navigational Markers (Pedestrian Scale)
Wayfinding signs that are visible for pedestrian and bicycle traffic to navigate throughout WC BART district.

2.122 Changeable Wall Banners
Project branded or tenant advertising opportunities that support project theeming and activates pedestrian space with messaging, imagery or color.
2.123 Wall Mounted Parking Entrance Signs
Labeled Parking structure signs for garage entry portal.

2.124 Changeable Light Post Banners
Project branded or community-based event advertising opportunities that support project theming and activates space at a vehicular scale.

2.125 Street Sign Directionals
Street signs appropriately themed with decorative elements that match project branding.

2.126 Parking Restrictions / Occupancy / Informational Signs
 Appropriately labeled parking information with digital counter of available parking spaces.
Guidelines for Retail Signage

Illumination:
External lighting fixtures that are affixed to wall surfaces are the preferred method of lighting signs in the WC BART zoning district (see figure above right). Lighting fixtures that are supported on the front of the building and cast light on the sign and a portion of the building face are preferred. External lighting emphasizes the continuity of the building’s surface and signs appear to be more of an integral part of the building’s facade.

Light fixtures used for externally illuminated signs should be simple and unobtrusive in appearance and size. Fixtures should not obscure the graphics of the sign.

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 appropriate forms of illuminated Signs. Exposed neon tubing script is not acceptable.

Materials:
Sign materials should be compatible with the design of the facade on which they are placed. Consider the architectural design of the building’s facade and select materials that complement the design. The selected materials should also contribute to the legibility of the sign. 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 design of the building, including the arrangement of bays and openings. Awnings should not obscure transom windows, grillework, 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 and 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 design of a building, including the arrangement of bays and openings. Signs should not obscure windows, grilwork, piers, pilasters, and ornamental features.

Projected Signs, Marquee Signs and Shingle Signs:
Projected signs are affixed to the face of a building or structure and project in a perpendicular manner to which it is mounted. Projecting signs are strongly encouraged.

Projecting signs should not be mounted above the second floor window sill in multi-storied buildings. The design of the sign should consider visually interesting elements such as square or rectangular shapes with painted or applied letters, two or three dimensional symbols or icons, irregular outlines, and/or 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:
Plaque signs are small versions of wall signs that are attached to surfaces adjacent to shop front entries. Plaque signs are to be located only on wall surfaces adjacent to tenant entries. Plaque signs are encouraged to include unique designs or other visually stimulating decorations and may be irregular in outline shape.

Window Signs:
Window signs are signs that are painted, posted, displayed, or etched on an interior translucent or transparent surface, including windows or doors. This type of signage generally contains only text but in some circumstances can express a special business personality through 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:**
The use of internally illuminated cabinet signs is 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 amateur in appearance.

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

**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
Acceptable Signage Recommendations

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.
7. Shingle Sign.
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 public art in the Transit Village. When possible, art elements should be conceived of as an integral part of or in tandem with the landscape design. An example of this would be unique lighting features that aid in way finding.

Design Recommendations

a. All proposed public art will meet the requirements of the city and Art Commission.

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

c. Inspiration for artistic themes might be found in the public transit found on-site.
SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Sustainability is embedded in all aspects of the 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, cost recovery, and waste are all aspects of sustainability that will be addressed in the design and implementation of the public realm and open space. Examples of sustainability will be prominent, showcased and integrated throughout the property.

Design Recommendations

1. To promote water conservation through the reduction of irrigation demand, the plant materials will primarily be drought tolerant and adapted species. Plants with higher water needs will be used sparingly according to microclimate conditions and special circumstances.

2. Planting and irrigation designs and specifications will follow the 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-based 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, capture particulate matter upstream of the storm drain system, and promote infiltration to ground water, rain gardens will be provided throughout the site.

6. To reduce the urban heat island effect, the increase in temperatures in urban areas, paving finishes will have a high reflectance value.

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

The design of the Private Realm addresses both urban design considerations, site specific recommendations, and building design within the Walnut Creek Transit Village.

Community Outreach Process

The goals and major design elements of the Transit Village, including the Private Realm, were developed over time through a number of staff and developer led community workshops that included members of the City Council, Planning Commission, Design Review Commission, Transportation Commission, Bicycle Advisory Committee, and the general public. These workshops have served to guide the (see figure 1.49) goals and principles presented in the introduction, as well as inspire the more specific goals and design recommendations in the pages to follow.

Project Goals and Strategies

The Walnut Creek Transit Village is envisioned to be a neighborhood composed of high quality, attractive and sustainable buildings that relate well to the surrounding context. They should be of a pedestrian scale, reinforce connectivity from within the Transit Village to the city, and foster the creation of a rich and inviting public realm.

The overarching goal for the architecture and urban design is Smart Place-Making, meaning the creation of a new transit-oriented neighborhood integrated with the city fabric. It will serve as a gateway to the downtown core and fulfill the need for sustainable growth.
Goals and Strategies for Smart Place Making:

a. **Draw from regional and local architectural influences while complementing the immediate context through all building design elements.**

b. **Reinforce the connection of the Transit Village to the surrounding neighborhood and downtown, and the public realm framework of streets and open spaces within the site.**

c. **Create a diverse range of complementary architectural styles that respond thoughtfully to their immediate context and the city of Walnut Creek.**

d. **Incorporate time-tested organization and composition with new technology and modern day materials, reduce the building mass, create interest and rhythm in the facade appropriate to its use and design with human scale proportions.**

e. **Incorporate defensible space design strategies and “eyes on the street” to reduce nuisance and increase safety through active environments.**

The intention of Section B in this chapter (Architecture/Urban Design) is to describe contextual influences, urban design considerations for each parcel with site specific goals and opportunities, as well as present recommendations that address the building design. These fundamental building design issues relate to architectural style and materials, facade articulation, ground level treatment, and other key design features.

Section C (General Design Criteria) presents general design guidelines applicable to all buildings within the Transit Village and includes design criteria for building frontage types, off-street parking, access and service driveways, building materials, window treatments, colors, forms and surfaces, roof-top equipment, utilities and trash enclosures.