

# Questions You've Been Asking

**Q Why is it important to have homes, shops and a train station near one another?**

**A** This type of land-use pattern is called a “mixed-use” neighborhood, in which facilities for walking, bicycling, and transit are located near homes and shops in the form of a neighborhood or district. The most successful mixed-use places are those that include a diversity of uses that complement one another – such as offices and homes near daycare centers, restaurants and coffee shops, and bicycle stations with lockers. This allows people to run errands on their way to and from work. Having a diverse mix of uses along a street also creates activity into the evening hours, providing a greater sense of community and security. Locating homes near jobs and transit encourages people to walk and use transit.

It's also important to have an appropriate mix of home types. The balance of “for-sale” versus rental housing reflects two legitimate interests - local residents who live near BART and the region's taxpayers who support BART. The region's taxpayers want to make sure the BART system can control the areas adjacent to the stations, thereby preferring to lease, rather than sell, land around those stations. The region's traffic and growth interests are also better served by placing as much housing as feasible near the station. Resolving these contrasting interests has been a challenge. BART has said it would consider a minimum of 50 for-sale housing units. We expect those units to be high-end townhomes.

**Q Why is public money being used to create this development?**

**A** There are many compelling reasons why Contra Costa County should invest public funds to develop the Pleasant Hill BART Station. Here's why we believe using such funds is a good idea:

- **It will create more jobs.** The Charrette plan calls for new businesses and services that will generate about 1,500 new jobs that will contribute significantly to the County's economy.
- **It will encourage “smart growth.”** Putting new development in areas with existing infrastructure and services, the County will save significant public tax dollars, compared to building in outlying areas.
- **It will increase the area's “location efficiency.”** Development around transit reduces transportation costs, creates fewer car trips, increases transportation options especially for children and seniors.

■ **It will create a good return on investment.** Development of the site will generate property and sales tax revenue for the County, lease revenues for both the County and BART, and additional ridership revenues for BART.

There has been considerable public input and participation through the Charrette process – not a requirement if this were being funded through private investments only. It makes sense to use both public and private sectors to share in the investment and to benefit from the rewards. Public funds therefore used for the Charrette. It is important to know, however, that most of these funds will be reimbursed by the project developer once the project receives land use approvals.

**Q How will parking be affected once buildings are constructed on the existing BART parking lots?**

**A** As part of the agreement between the developer and BART, all existing BART patron parking spaces on the site will be replaced in an expanded BART parking garage. In addition, the 581 “temporary” parking spaces currently on the Iron Horse corridor will be included in the expanded garage allowing the landscaping project to move forward. Of the “temporary” spaces, 231 spaces will be paid parking, helping to offset some of the additional costs for structured parking, as well as helping to fund shuttle bus service for nearby residents to get to and from the BART station without using their cars.

Additional parking garages will be built to accommodate the new residences, offices, community uses, and retail space. Some of the paid parking in these garages could be used for by BART patrons. Temporary measures will be taken to assure that there will be no loss of existing parking capacity during construction.

Pricing has a strong effect on demand and is a factor in whether people decide to drive or use other transportation choices. BART policy requires that the existing BART dedicated parking be replaced and continue to be free. All additional BART and project parking could be priced at market rates. Revenues received will help pay for construction and operation of the parking facility, and possibly, to pay for a shuttle bus service.

**Q How closely will the actual station resemble what is pictured and described in this brochure?**

**A** There are three reasons why the end result will resemble the publicly endorsed Charrette design presented here: (1) There is strong political support for the design, (2) Detailed urban design Codes, when written into law, must be followed when developing the site, and (3) The project makes economic sense as shown.

More than 500 neighbors, community activists, business leaders, BART commuters, and high-ranking political leaders joined together to create the Pleasant Hill BART Station Community Plan as something that will work for the community as a whole. The specific design was strongly endorsed by a majority of those who participated in the process, and such support will help keep the project moving forward.

The consultant team created an urban design Code based on the design plans and illustrations created during the Charrette. Codes will ensure that any new buildings around the BART station are consistent with what is shown in the Charrette images.

The Codes will regulate, for example, the placement, height, use of buildings, and architectural elements that give buildings their character.

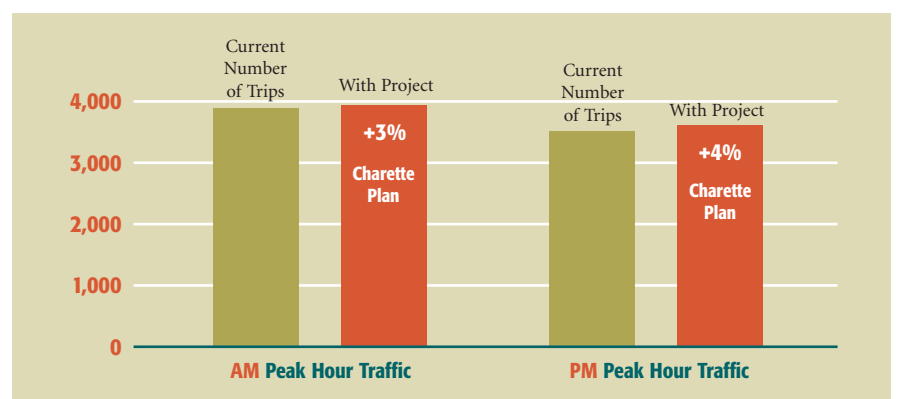
Finally, this plan will be built consistent with the plan because it is financially viable. It combines the elements of an attractive, well-functioning community, with a feasible financial strategy. Financial feasibility forms the basis for the developer's confidence in the plan.

**Q How will the transportation system around the BART station be affected?**

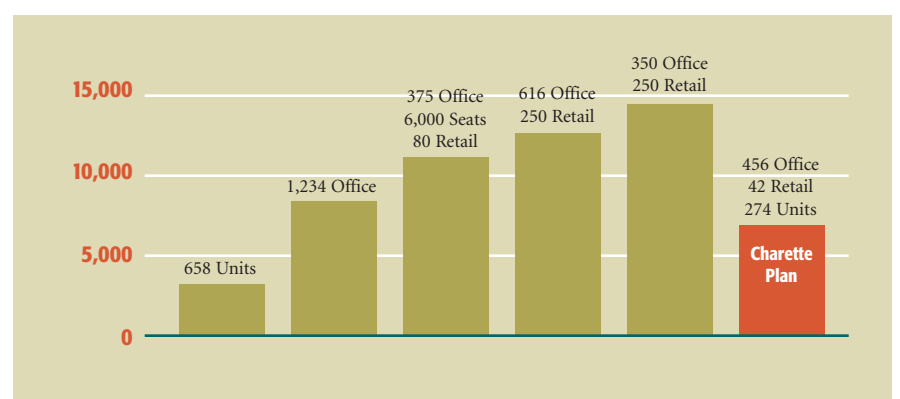
**A** The plan will add relatively few cars to Treat Boulevard. There will be no more than a five percent increase in traffic during peak hours once the project is completed, according to projections (see graph below).

The bus area will look quite different. Riders will board and exit buses at locations around the Station Square. This will bring people to the Station Square and to the businesses that surround the square. During drop-off and pick-up times, the buses will be parked for only three to five minutes. A separate bus holding area, where buses stand during their scheduled waiting time, will be located in the alley between the tracks and Block C. The taxi and passenger drop-off location would be on the north side of the tracks next to the station.

## Estimated Peak Hour Traffic Increase on Treat Boulevard



## Daily Trip Generation (EIR Alternatives and Charette Plan)



Office/retail in thousands of square feet