

Richmond Transit Village City of Richmond, CA



TOD Technical Assistance Panel Thursday, July 12th, 2007

Lori Reese-Brown, Principal Planner
Gary Hembree, Chief of Redevelopment Projects
Alan Wolken, Deputy Director, Redevelopment
Michael Williams, Development Project Manager

City of Richmond Profile:

Total Area: 33.8 square miles of land area

Total Miles of Shoreline: 32 miles

Location: 16 miles northeast of San Francisco, on a peninsula separating San Francisco Bay and San Pablo Bay.

Incorporated: August 7, 1905. Richmond is a charter city.

Type of Government: Council-Manager system. City Council has 9 members elected at large to alternating 4-year terms. Mayor is elected at large and is a member of the City Council.

Mayor: Gayle McLaughlin

City Council Members: Gayle McLaughlin, Maria T. Viramontes, John E. Marquez, Thomas K. Butt, Tony K. Thurmond, Ludmyrna Lopez, Harpreet Sandhu, Jim Rodgers, Nate Bates

City Manager: William A. Lindsay

Assistant City Manager / Human Resources Mgmt. Director: Leslie Knight

Population Profile:



POPULATION:

Total population 96,648 +/-9,881

Male 46,691 48.3 49.0% +/-5,357

Female 49,957 51.7 51.0% +/-5,539

HOUSING:

Housing Stock by Type of Unit:

Single Family Detached Units 21,326

Single Family Attached 2,931

Multifamily 2-4 Units 5,367

Multifamily 5+ Units 7,911

Mobile Homes 121

TOTAL 37,656

Vacancy Rate: 3.94%

Average Household Size: 2.815

(Estimates from January 1, 2006 by CA State Department of Finance)

CITY PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES: Total City parks: 292.6 Acres

Transit Village Project Description & Environmental Assessment:



The Richmond Transit Village project is a comprehensive program to increase homeownership opportunities and enhance the quality of life in the "Iron Triangle" community, an economically distressed and minority neighborhood located in the City Center area of downtown Richmond. Based on the principles of sustainable growth and new urbanism, the proposed project will create a livable community that integrates housing, shopping, enhanced transit facilities, a new cultural facility, and public resources. The proposed mix of uses and activities reinforce the City's commitment to fostering a wide range of community development goals, as outlined in the Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development and the Iron Triangle-Woods Revitalization Area Plan.

The Iron Triangle represents approximately ten percent of the City of Richmond's population, however over 90 percent of the residents of the area are members of minority groups. The neighborhood exhibits a host of distress criteria, including low incomes, high crime rates, widespread unemployment, and a high percent of vacant and abandoned housing units. In recent years, the City of Richmond and Richmond Redevelopment Agency have made substantial progress in creating economic development opportunities and developing affordable housing projects, including over 200 new and rehabilitated housing units, and over 200 new jobs within the past five years. The Transit Village is a neighborhood enhancement project that will be the centerpiece of the City's economic development efforts in the Iron Triangle neighborhood. This project is the next critical step in addressing the socio-economic challenges of the area.

The Richmond Transit Village project is a major urban redevelopment project being undertaken in partnership with the Richmond Redevelopment Agency, BART, and other transit agencies. The goal of the project is to create a transit-oriented urban village that provides residents with a convenient urban location and the opportunity to access multiple modes of public transit. The project will redevelop underutilized, largely vacant, property (controlled by the Redevelopment Agency), and will replace existing surface parking for BART patrons with structured parking, thus freeing land to be included in the mixed-use, transit village.

The Richmond Transit Village project is located on approximately 16.7 acres centered around the Richmond BART and Amtrak Stations in the City of Richmond. Generally the project site is bounded by Barrett Avenue to the north, 19th Street to the east, MacDonald Avenue to the south, and South Marina Way to the west. The project will be constructed in two phases, and would consist of a total of 231 units of ownership housing, including townhouses and live-work units; 27,250 square feet of retail space; a 30,000 square foot Cultural Arts Facility; a 3,700 square foot intermodal transit station which will house a community police

substation as well as facilities for transit operators; and a five-story, 800-space garage facility that will include 9,000 square feet of ground-floor retail.

Phase 1 begins the project on the west side of the existing BART station and railroad rights-of-way and will include 132 units of housing, approximately 7,500 square feet of retail, and a five story, 800-space BART parking garage with an additional 9,000 square feet of ground floor retail space. Phase I will redesign and elevate the Nevin Avenue walkway which provides primary access to the transit station from the west and will lead pedestrians to a plaza, immediately west of the BART station, where the new 3,700 square foot intermodal transit will be constructed.

Phase 2 will construct 99 housing units, approximately 10,750 square feet of retail space, and a 30,000 square foot Cultural Art Facility, and will elevate the Nevin Avenue walkway to provide enhanced transit access to the station from the east. Except for the Cultural Arts Facility, all Phase 2 improvements would be constructed on the east side of the existing BART station.



Other project components include small neighborhood parks that would be developed in each phase of residential construction, new streets to support vehicular and pedestrian circulation throughout the project, including automobile and pedestrian entrances to Nevin Avenue on both the east and west sides of the BART station to create a visual, as well as vehicular and pedestrian linkage to the transit facilities from the east and west.

The HUD funded component of the project consists of a five-story, 800-space parking structure with 9,000 square feet of ground floor retail, and related pedestrian and plaza improvements, as well as site preparation, and public facilities which include utilities and road work. The proposed parking structure will replace up to 635 existing BART parking spaces presently located on two existing BART surface lots on the east and west sides of the station. The proposed garage would be constructed to serve the existing BART station, as well as the proposed new retail and Cultural Arts facility. Separate parking would be provided for all residential units.

The site lies within the City of Richmond, Contra Costa County, California. The project site is located in the Iron Triangle neighborhood, which is part of the downtown Richmond City Center area. Existing uses on the site include the Richmond BART/Amtrak station, two surface parking lots, containing 635 spaces; a Union Pacific (UP) rail platform, vacant land, and two warehouses used for storage by the City of Richmond. The BART and UP rail rights-of-way parallel the parking lots and bisect the site ifrom northwest to southeast. Land uses in the surrounding area are a mix of government services, retail businesses, service commercial, a church, and mixed-density residential. The surrounding area can be generally characterized as economically depressed, as evidenced by the high

percentage of vacant and abandoned housing units and the lack of vital retail and commercial uses.



The project site was previously designated for office use in the Center City Specific Plan. However, current economic and market conditions do not support office development at this location, and the site has remained underused and vacant. Without the proposed project, the potential for continued economic development in the area is likely to be weak and fragmented. The Transit Village will provide a major mixed-use urban redevelopment project

which provides the critical mass and variety of uses necessary to stimulate and sustain economic development in the area.

For units along the BART and Amtrak rail lines, sound-rated windows and exterior building construction would control indoor noise levels to the HUD recommended noise level of 45 LDN. All units would be located within 100 feet of BART lines, and 50 feet from Amtrak rail lines, which would meet HUD recommendations to locate residential units no closer than 100 feet from rail lines. Hazardous materials, including solvents, asbestos and lead-based paints were observed in one building on-site that is currently used for storage by the Richmond Department of Public Works. The Phase 1 Environmental Assessment recommended removal of all asbestos containing materials by a qualified asbestos contractor, and removal and disposal of all hazardous materials prior to demolition of this building. The Assessment indicates that the likelihood of significant contamination on or below the site is relatively low. Source: Richmond Transit Village, Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, October 2, 2000. No above ground tanks are located on or near the site.

The proposed project is not located within or near a Runway Clear Zone. The nearest FAA commercial service airport is located in Oakland, CA, approximately 15 miles to the southeast. Source: FAA List of Commercial Service Airports, December 31, 1991.

The traffic analysis determined that all affected intersections in the project area would continue to operate at acceptable levels. As part of the project, Macdonald Avenue would be configured with two westbound through lanes and on-street parking along the edge of the project site between 16th Street and Marina Way. The project will construct a 800-space parking structure to replace 635 spaces of BART surface parking lost due to project development, and to serve retail uses and the cultural arts facility. Separate on-site parking would be provided for project residents. During construction, replacement parking for BART patrons would be provided at a nearby site. (Richmond Transit Village, Traffic Impact Study, October 2000, and Traffic Impacts of Planned Addition of 120 New BART Spaces, July 15, 2002.)