### **El Cerrito Plaza BART TOD Community Open House**

### **October 3, 2019, 6:30-8:30PM**

### **Summary of Comments**

In early October, the City of El Cerrito, BART, and TransForm hosted an open house-style community workshop about options for future transit-oriented development (TOD) at El Cerrito Plaza BART station. The open house was held at the Hana Gardens Senior Center on San Pablo Avenue. The two-hour event drew more than 100 attendees.

Attendees had the opportunity to learn about and comment on the El Cerrito Plaza TOD draft goals and objectives. Those goals included the following:

* **Complete Communities:** Partner with the city of El Cerrito to ensure BART contributes to neighborhood/commercial district vitality, creating places offering a mix of uses and incomes.
* **Sustainable Communities Strategy:** Lead in the delivery of the region’s land use and transportation vision to achieve quality of life, economic, and greenhouse gas reduction goals.
* **Ridership:** increase BART ridership, particularly in locations and times when the system has the capacity to grow.
* **Value Creation, Value Capture:** enhance the stability of BART’s financial base by capturing the value of transit and reinvesting in the program to achieve TOD goals.
* **Affordability:** Serve households of all income levels by linking housing affordability with access to opportunity
* **Transportation Choice:** Leverage land use and urban design to encourage non-auto transportation choices both on and off BART property through enhanced walkability, bikeability, and seamless transit connectivity.

Attendees left sticky notes and comment cards at each presentation board expressing their opinions and concerns. Resident comments largely focused on the following issues:

* ***Station access improvements,***
* ***Parking reduction, and***
* ***Housing and community improvements.***

Overall, attendees submitted approximately 240 sticky notes and comment cards in total. The following notes summarize feedback. The feedback summaries represent frequently stated opinions across segments of the attendees. These summaries are not meant to represent each attendee’s perspective on any of the goals or issues.

### **Comments regarding station access improvement:**

Commenters expressed **reluctance to reduce parking** because of concerns over limited **access for elderly transit riders** who may not be able to physically bike and walk far distances.

Commenters expressed **support for making El Cerrito Plaza BART safer and more walkable**.

* Some comments suggested that pedestrian safety could improve with fewer drivers.
* Many suggested shuttles or increased transit/micro-mobility alternatives

Commenters expressed **concerns for residents who live in the hills**. They believe if developments reduce parking, those residents suffer the most and will lose access since there is **limited bus service**.

### **Comments regarding parking reduction:**

**Comments were split on whether street parking could accommodate people who drive to BART**. *Note:* [*All attendees received a one-page handout*](http://www.transformca.org/sites/default/files/El%20Cerrito%20Plaza%20BART%20one%20pager.pdf) *that provided an overview of recent data that reviewed how residents commuted to the El Cerrito Plaza BART station.*

* Some think street parking is already full and any parking reduction would make it harder for riders to access the station because of **permit zones and parking tickets.**
* Others believed street parking would be able to support commuter parking **if more mobility options were available.**
* Comments suggested that BART **ridership may decrease** if parking is reduced since the El Cerrito Plaza BART supports residents from neighboring cities as well.
* Many supported parking reduction because it would **increase pedestrian safety, open housing development opportunities, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.**
* A small segment of the attendees expressed disappointment with the limited amount of parking for bikes and scooters.

### **Comments regarding housing and community improvements:**

Comments expressed support for building additional **affordable homes near BART** stations to maximize access and density. They believed it would help with the housing crisis, support families, and increase transit ridership.

Comments supported more homes in place of parking and expressed **interest in commercial retail development** that would open up more opportunities and activities for residents and commuters.

Comments that were not in favor of developments at the station expressed concern about losing the “character” of El Cerrito. Some specific examples mentioned the City’s limited “infrastructural capability,” such as space downtown and the community’s inability to handle an influx of thousands of residents from high rises.