



Oakland Transit Village Is Rising

City planners and BART officials pin renewal and ridership hopes on new development.

By **Sasha Vasilyuk**

The area surrounding Oakland's MacArthur BART station, while located near the major intersection of Highway 24 and Interstate 580, has not been a model of urban glory. The neighborhood currently features a below street-grade parking lot, a small strip mall, a surgery center, a church and single-family homes.

But developers of the new MacArthur BART transit village hope the \$370 million, 7.76-acre project will do much to change the area's look. The new community is to include affordable and market-rate housing, retail, a parking garage and a child care center. Fingers are crossed that the development expands upon the success of the nearby Temescal district.

"The Temescal-area retailers are already expanding on their own, but there is a dead area now on Telegraph [Avenue] where there is a lot of vacancy, and we are hoping that that stretch will be helped," said Kathy Kleinbaum, project manager at the city's redevelopment agency. "You put 624 housing units and a major destination—the BART station—and we think those people are going to shop in the Temescal district."

First to be constructed is the 480-car garage that will replace BART's surface parking lot. The site's main developer, affordable housing giant Bridge Housing, will then build 108 affordable housing units starting this fall, with an expected completion date of 2014. The 516 market-rate housing units with 42,500 square feet of retail space and 5,000 square-foot child care facility will be built last. The market-rate developer has not been chosen yet, but construction is planned to start before 2014.

The MacArthur transit village has been a long time coming, but it is one of a growing number of transit-oriented developments being built on BART property around the bay. Oakland city documents note that the MacArthur project has been grinding forward since 1993 and has gone through multiple iterations. Bridge Housing, along with its Oakland-based partner McGrath Properties, started work on the development in 2004.

"This is a pretty complex project," said Cynthia Parker, president and chief executive of Bridge, which has worked on previous transit-oriented developments in Fremont and San Francisco. "The entitlement process is quite lengthy in the Bay Area, and the complexity of dealing with multiple government agencies takes some time. The financial crisis was slowing things down as well."

This page

Top Left: Future MacArthur transit village
Top Right: Current MacArthur BART station
Bottom Left: Telegraph Avenue

Opposite Page

Top to Bottom: MacArthur Transit Village parking structure,
Current MacArthur BART station & parking lot

Bridge also has had to secure the necessary funding—about \$80 million for the garage and the affordable housing piece, which is coming from tax-credit investments, the redevelopment agency and Prop. 1C, a \$2.85 billion state program to fund infill and transit-oriented projects.

As part of a complicated land swap, BART is giving away the surface parking lot in exchange for the new garage and improvements to the MacArthur station. The

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