

## **TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT IN FOUR CITIES**

Presented To The Partnership For Regional Livability  
Chicago, Illinois  
August, 2001

By Gloria Ohland For The Great American Station Foundation

**T**here are two great comebacks taking place in America at the beginning of the 21st century: The first is that people are moving back into America's cities, and so is investment. Urban centers are being seen as desirable places to live, more so than at any time since World War II. The second is a resurgence of interest and investment in rail systems. Virtually every major city is planning some urban rail or busway system, and there are plans to link up metropolitan regions via high-speed rail. This is happening at the same time that the use of public transit, again for the first time since World War II, has begun to consistently outpace the growth in driving.

At the convergence of these trends is the realization that a substantial market exists for walkable, mixed-use urban development around transit stations. Prompted in part by changing demographics as well as the intractable problem of traffic congestion, which has made suburban living less desirable, there has been a diversification of real estate projects. Transit-oriented development is beginning to receive serious attention in markets as

diverse as the San Francisco Bay area, suburban New Jersey, Dallas and Chicago.

These transit-oriented developments have the potential to provide residents with improved quality of life and reduced household transportation expenses, while providing the region with stable mixed-income neighborhoods that reduce the environmental impacts of growth. Transit-oriented development can help address problems ranging from sprawl, traffic congestion and poor air quality, to the shortage of affordable housing and the need for reinvestment in urban core communities. In short, TOD is a multi-faceted tool that can be used to address some of our most pressing problems, and it holds the promise of making the American way of life more sustainable.

Sadly, our review of the projects that are emerging reveals that many fall short of this potential. Failures of design and planning abound, and many TODs are nothing more than traditional suburban developments that happen to be located near transit. Institutional issues include unfriendly zoning codes and parking ordinances, and the difficulties inherent in complex projects with many partners, some of whom may have differing objectives. Financing is difficult, and there's often community opposition. As a result, transit-oriented development has yet to attract significant investment compared to more conventional real estate projects.

This paper looks at the progress of transit-oriented development in four cities: in Atlanta, where rail stations have attracted significant investment but where there is no urban fabric to link this development into surrounding land uses; in San Francisco, where one observer notes that "TOD projects are springing up like mushrooms"; in Chicago, which has been doing transit-oriented development since the mid-1800s; and in Denver, which has only a skeletal rail system and is experimenting with "evolutionary TOD" projects.

The problems encountered in each city are instructive, providing insight into the work that must be done to realize the potential of transit-oriented development by bringing it to scale as a national trend.

## **ATLANTA: LOADS OF POTENTIAL**

**W**hen Parsons-Brinckerhoff consultant Leon Eplan was researching transit systems for Atlanta in the mid '70s, he remembers being taken to the top of a tall building in Vancouver and being impressed by how many tall buildings poked up through the canopy of trees all along the city's heavy rail system. Clearly, the rail investment had the ability to shape growth, and if it had such a profound effect in Toronto, why couldn't it help shape growth in Atlanta?

The sales tax measure supporting construction and operation of the rail system passed in only two of the five counties that make up metropolitan Atlanta, however, limiting rail's effect on regional development. Eplan, by then head of planning for the city, was keenly disappointed through the next decade to see the white middle class and employers continue their exodus from the city to the counties to the north, pushing suburban development further and further out until it sprawled over 18 counties.

As elsewhere in the U.S., however, the trend has reversed. This small city of 427,500 -- about 13 percent of the region's 3.2 million residents -- is seeing population increase after 30 years of decline, with double-digit growth predicted for this decade. Today the view from atop any tall building in Atlanta approximates that in Toronto: You also see tall buildings poking up along the rail system as it travels through downtown to the more affluent suburbs to the north.

Investment has come back south, first to the wealthy areas surrounding the Metropolitan Atlanta Regional Transportation Authority's (MARTA's) Buckhead and Lenox stations seven miles north of the city center, and now to Midtown and downtown Atlanta. There's so much new development in Midtown, all of it adjacent to three MARTA stations, that the Midtown Alliance's website offers a "Midtown Development Tour" map with links to 47 webpages detailing separate projects.

"You can count on your fingers the number of tall buildings that are not within walking distance of a MARTA station," says Eplan. "Rail does have a profound effect on development. I just didn't understand how long it would

take. We did the right station area planning. We did the right zoning. But we were missing the third ingredient -- the market -- which is necessary in the U.S. where we don't have the same control over land use as in Toronto." As a result, most development near MARTA was office development, as the market just wasn't there for urban housing at the time. Now of course that's starting to change, and Eplan says the lesson is that one must have both good planning and supportive market conditions for mixed use TOD to work.

MARTA's Paul Vespermann, head of the agency's transit-related development department, has statistics to prove that the market is interested. Investments in new construction and renovation within a quarter mile of stations totaled \$885 million in 2000, with another \$102 million in proposed development -- up from \$537.5 million in 1996.

Many people in Atlanta question, however, just how much of an effect the proximity of rail has exercised. They point out that developers building high-rise infill residential and office buildings are attracted by the "special public interest" zoning that was put in place around the stations, which permits Manhattan-scale densities and reduces parking requirements. The fact that this zoning is already in place has had the unintended and unfortunate effect of leaving the city and communities with little leverage when negotiating with developers over proposed projects. But it has resulted in extensive transit-adjacent development, with high densities and some mixed uses, especially in Midtown Atlanta.

"The potential to make Atlanta truly transit-oriented is incredible," says Larry Frank of the Georgia Institute of Technology. "But there are major problems. Foremost among them is an alarming and woeful lack of connectivity between the development and the stations, and between the stations and the communities that surround them. It's like trying to cook soup when you've left the plastic wrappers on all the ingredients -- there ends up being no chemistry between them."

Adds Caleb Racico, formerly of the city's planning department and now with the architectural firm of Tunnell-Spangler, "When you don't have a pedestrian-friendly environment to provide connections between public transit and destinations, then the presence or absence of transit is almost irrelevant. There has been a collision of forces that is changing Atlanta from a backwater town into a backwater town with skyscrapers. But what we have

is not really transit-oriented development and there's no urban fabric. It's suburban development plopped on top of rail stations."

Critics say that what some are calling transit-oriented development is merely "infill development with wrappers" -- with ground floor retail or something that provides a veneer of mixed-use, but not the integration that is essential to successful transit-oriented development. The joint development that has occurred over several MARTA stations, for example, is inwardly focused, with densities that make the developments appear fortress-like from the outside. Moreover, there has been little development of housing or other space that is affordable.

Both critics and boosters can agree that a major problem has been the provision of too much parking, much of it required by the lending institutions who have insisted -- especially at the stations outside of downtown and Midtown -- on suburban-level parking ratios before they'll provide financing. The need to provide parking has had a deleterious effect on both transit system ridership and on the cost of the projects.

"TOD is a very urban concept and a very expensive undertaking, and financial institutions in Atlanta, which are used to suburban development, don't really get it," says former Manhattan resident M. Von Nkosi of the Atlanta Neighborhoods Development Partnership. "They don't want to fund mixed-use, especially if it's a vertical mix, so you end up with very complicated deals where five different banks are funding one project. And if the developer has to build a 15-story parking deck in order to provide one parking space per bedroom it shoots the cost right out of the box."

The result has been transit-oriented residential projects with apartments, condos and townhomes that are priced above what many Atlanta residents can afford. While the people who move into them may have ready access to transit, they probably also own a Lexus. And as long as MARTA continues to offer what one critic calls a "low-service ethic with uninviting and uncomfortable train stations that look like concrete bunkers," and as long as there is ready parking adjacent to stations, customers with the means to choose are not likely to choose transit.

"I don't think it ever even occurs to most of the people who can afford to move into Buckhead and Midtown that they could use transit," says Jeff

Rader of the Atlanta Homebuilders Association, adding that he believes that “the phenomenon of dysfunctional density” is as much of a problem as parking. “A great impediment to TOD in Atlanta is entitlements to extreme density, because all that density and access and mobility causes the value of property to inflate, which creates a lot of pressure to create monocultures of offices or retail. For example, you end up building \$40 a square foot space that’s too expensive for anything but high-end offices. Or you create a concentration of commercial activity that needs to draw patrons from a vast market area that isn’t serviceable by transit.”

The result has been projects that combine office and retail, but no housing, or that promise housing in the second phase of development, which never gets built. Because the projects are of such large scale and have not been integrated into the surrounding communities, there are unfortunate juxtapositions, such as that near Piedmont Park north of Midtown, of gated communities of single family homes next to high-density residential or office projects next to large commercial developments with vast parking lots, divided by wide arterials filled with fast-moving traffic. “It’s really a worst-case scenario,” says Georgia Tech’s Larry Frank. “There’s lots of density and destinations that are close together but there’s no safe way to walk. The result is that people drive to where they could throw a football.”

Jeff Rader believes that urbanist Jane Jacobs’ critique of urban renewal in the ‘60s applies to TOD in the ‘90s: He says that the practice of constructing a rail station and assembling and clearing the land around it in the hopes of eventually building a mega-TOD project doesn’t work any better than clearing away blighted communities in order to erect high-rise public housing or master-planned communities -- an approach that has long since been discredited. Development needs to happen more organically, he says, with a gradual layering of infill over generations, because the “clean slate” approach means that a single project must bear the full cost of redevelopment.

**W**hen asked to name the best examples of TOD in Atlanta, most people don’t point to the mega projects, Buckhead or Lenox, but rather to Midtown and the downtown of suburban Decatur, older neighborhoods that are seeing a layering-on of infill development. Decatur, about five minutes out of downtown Atlanta on the East Line, is a highlight of every TOD tour of Atlanta, where someone will tell the rags-to-riches story:

The downtown was abandoned when a freeway took everyone away to bigger, newer regional attractions, and then it was leveled during station construction. But through perseverance, vision, the national Main Street program, and good TOD design guidelines and zoning, downtown Decatur has itself become a regional attraction, its town square lined with unusual shops, restaurants and music venues, including a band shell built over the station. “We like to think that our town square has become a living room of sorts for the community,” boasts Planning Department staffer Linda Harris.

In Midtown, the Midtown Alliance, a civic and business group, is working to make this dense, urbane neighborhood adjacent to Atlanta’s Champs-Elysee, the Peachtree Corridor, more transit-oriented. The community and city are working to implement Blueprint Midtown, Atlanta’s largest rezoning project, to mandate mixed-use, limit parking, and create density bonuses for retail and affordable housing. The Alliance has received a \$26 million grant for streetscaping, trees, benches, wider sidewalks and bike lanes, which they intend to create by removing lanes of traffic. A transportation management association has begun arranging van pools, carpools and discounted transit passes, and is considering locating electric station cars at the three Midtown stations.

TOD enthusiasts all over the U.S. are intrigued by and enthusiastic about the New Urbanist design of the gigantic mixed-use development atop the MARTA station at Lindbergh Center. It will be a 57-acre mini-city with a pedestrian friendly Main Street lined with shops and restaurants that bridge over the transit station and extend into a multi-family residential area; the project’s gridded street network will connect with streets in existing neighborhoods. Construction has begun on the project, which will include 2.7 million square feet of office space, 300,000 square feet of ground level retail, 566 apartments, 388 condominiums, and a 190-room hotel, and an astonishing 10,461 parking spaces. That number was reduced from the 19,000 developers had wanted after protests from surrounding neighborhoods concerned about traffic culminated in a lawsuit and eventual settlement on the lower number.

Adding to the excitement about Lindberg was the announcement in early 1999 that BellSouth, the region’s second largest employer, would consolidate 10,500 employees working in scattered suburban locations into

three new developments to be built at MARTA's Midtown, Lenox and Lindbergh stations -- putting 85 percent of BellSouth employees within easy access of transit. In an acknowledgement of the region's auto-dependency, however, BellSouth will build four additional parking lots at four outlying MARTA stations. MARTA's Paul Vespermann projects that the combined revenues from the resulting ground leases and increased ridership should add up to a 22 percent return on MARTA's investment in Lindbergh -- a handsome rate of return likely to snap other transit agencies to attention about TOD's profit-making potential.

Atlanta seems poised on the brink: Policy makers are seeing the potential of TOD to focus development and encourage transit ridership, thereby addressing the region's well-publicized problems with sprawl, air quality and unbearable traffic congestion. But it remains uncertain whether there will be the political will or public support to realize the potential. The unwillingness of communities to link up with transit and transit-oriented development is partly due to concerns about high densities and traffic, but belies deeper divisions having to do with ethnicity and equity.

These issues are playing out with grimly ironic consequences at Lindbergh Center, which will surround the MARTA station with so much development and traffic that it will serve to separate, by a heavily trafficked eight-lane arterial, the adjacent low-income communities from the transit on which they are dependent. There will be no affordable housing at Lindbergh Center. "When you talk about mixed-use it's critical to include a mix of price points -- it's a fundamental component of TOD," says Larry Frank, who was involved in only the earliest stages of the lengthy design process.

Moreover, Governor Ray Barnes has just put together a bond proposal to fund \$8.5 billion in transportation projects weighted heavily toward road work, including improvements to rural highways and an HOV network on urban highways, as well as funding for what critics call a "killer, massive sprawlway" in the wealthy, white northern suburbs. There is no money for pedestrian improvements or streetscape projects.

The Greater Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA), which was created two years ago to provide leadership on transportation and land use issues -- and with veto power over "projects of regional influence" that are not in the region's best interest -- has proceeded instead with extreme caution. It is

telling that no one contacted during research for this paper referred this writer to anyone at GRTA. The Atlanta Regional Commission, the metropolitan planning organization, has provided some vision, and a small but influential Livable Communities Initiative that has funded planning efforts around stations in 22 neighborhoods.

“The Livable Communities Initiative comprises just one percent of the regional transportation investment,” says Frank. “But it’s extremely important to model how communities can come together to do the right kind of planning up front. Now we should link up eligibility for the rest of the funding with support for appropriate land uses. And we need to dump money into pedestrian improvements and plazas and benches and parks. It’s very nice that they’re spending \$26 million in Midtown. But regionwide we need to spend about \$1 billion.

“Then we need to demonstrate that in order to solve the transportation and air quality problem we need a dense urban fabric that knits communities together.” Frank intends to do that with his Smartraq research program at Georgia Tech, where he’s gathering information on pedestrian travel and land use to provide for the Atlanta Regional Commission’s regional transportation planning models. “And it will be a hot time in the old town,” he predicts, when this data gets integrated into the transportation models, documenting the need for other than auto-oriented investments.

“There’s so much resistance to TOD from so many communities that I say let’s just go for the low-hanging fruit and build projects in communities that want them,” says M. Von Nkosi from the Atlanta Neighborhoods Development Association. As examples he cites one proposed mixed-use TOD project at the West End station on the South Line, adjacent to six historically black universities and colleges. Another mixed-use project, called Westfield Village, is breaking ground at the Ashby Station, also in an African American neighborhood, and will feature the first full-service grocery store ever built in the community, as well as affordable housing, a hotel, office space and retail, and which will integrate older, historic buildings into the development.

“I say why bother trying to convince communities that freak out at densities above ten dwelling units an acre?” he continues. “They’ll figure it out soon enough when they find they can’t get to any other place in the city without a

grueling commute. Because no matter how many highways the governor builds he isn't going to get rid of traffic."

## **SAN FRANCISCO: LOTS OF TOD**

If Atlanta has been reluctant to embrace transit-oriented development, the Bay Area has not, inspired in part by a housing shortage and by a real estate market that is sizzling. Any development in San Francisco qualifies as transit-adjacent if not transit-oriented, and the Bay Area is more transit-rich and has more transit users per capita than any cities besides New York and Washington D.C. Ninety-five percent of all addresses in San Francisco are within walking distance of transit; though nobody's counted in Oakland the percentage is probably no less.

San Jose, meantime, is trying hard to catch up. The city has in place ambitious and aggressive programs to densify and direct all new development, especially housing, to its transit stations. As a result transit-oriented developments in the South Bay are "springing up like mushrooms," according to one observer. "Things are going almost too well," cautions one transit agency staff member. Admits another, "It's been so easy to attract development that I could have been asleep and I'd still look good."

The conditions in the Bay Area couldn't be more ripe: Housing prices and land values are in the stratosphere, and every developer wants in on the game; the Bay Area attracts car-less young urbanites who wouldn't be caught dead in the suburbs, and has perhaps an excess of planners and architects; more than a dozen urban growth boundaries have made significant amounts of open space off limits for development; addressing the jobs-housing imbalance is on the top of many agendas; the housing shortage has been in the headlines for most of the last decade; and, of course, there's the intractable problem of sprawl and the resulting traffic congestion and unbearable commutes.

"TOD has become a household word. Anyone interested in civic issues is advocating for TOD," says Stewart Cohen of the Bay Area Transportation and Land Use Coalition. Adds Rachel Peterson of Urban Ecology, "Transit-oriented development is viewed as the perfect vehicle to address so many of the Bay Area's problems. And because the housing shortage, especially the

affordable housing shortage, is on everyone's mind, when you think of TOD you always think of housing.”

But despite the near optimum conditions, at least compared to other regions in the U.S., TOD is still the great exception to the rule, most of it is very new, and many people question whether much of it's good. A project with high densities, reduced parking, affordable housing, and a mix of uses will still encounter strong local opposition and a maze of regulations. Says Peterson, “The result is a number of individual projects where the developer has obtained a variance, or has partnered with a non-profit housing developer, or has gotten a density bonus from the city, or has been given a special reduction on parking. Unfortunately, that doesn't add up to a wave of development.”

Peter Albert of the Bay Area Rapid Transit District estimates that there are a total of about 35-40 TODs that have been constructed along the region's six rail systems in the past several years, with easily double that number in planning or in the early stages of construction, and not counting the large number of developments that have been built within a block of stations in San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose. “I just missed a phone call while we were talking -- and that could have been a proposal for another TOD,” he jokes, though he's only half kidding. “I'm amazed at how many proposals I get.”

To put the construction boom into perspective, however, Grieg Asher from the Valley Transportation Authority, known for the ambitiousness of its TOD effort, says that 90 percent of station areas along VTA's lines still have no grocery store, and he says he's built only one child care center. He notes that VTA has been successful in partnering with non-profit affordable housing providers, however, and that there have been more than 1,000 units of affordable housing constructed at VTA stations. BART has even more, he says.

The fact that there are so many non-profit providers of affordable housing in the Bay Area, and the fact that the need is so great, has given rise to many creative partnerships. Dan Slarskey of Bridge Housing, which is the largest provider of affordable housing in the Bay Area and has built 10,000 units in the past 18 years, says nearly all their projects are located near transit. “It's one of those project goals that everyone knows is good,” he says. “TOD

projects are ideal for affordable housing since they may be perceived by the market as less desirable sites, and since many residents who live there won't own cars and don't want to pay for parking garages for those who do."

But Asher says that while VTA and San Jose are well-known for ambitiously promoting and implementing TOD, and for integrating affordable housing into their developments, that the pace of development -- when looked at in the big picture-- is "like water torture." "Can TOD help address the affordable housing shortage? Well, at our Ohlone-Chynoweth station we built 190 affordable units and the project took seven years. So, yes, we can keep adding to the affordable housing supply, drop by drop. What we need to do is figure out how to turn on the spigot."

Can TOD help address the overall housing shortage? If -- to come up with a ballpark figure -- one considers that almost every TOD in the Bay Area has a housing component of between 50 and 300 units, and that there are about 35 projects, and if one adds in the hundreds of units that are being constructed within a block of stations in urban environments, then the answer is yes. "But when you consider that each year Kauffman and Broad plops down another 12,000 to 15,000 units of sprawl housing in the greenfields, it's a sobering comparison," adds Asher.

**T**he Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Bay Area's metropolitan planning organization, has in place two significant programs that link transportation and land use and promote TOD. The Livable Communities (TLC) program, like the Atlanta Regional Commission's Livable Communities Initiative, funds TOD planning efforts in communities. But projects with completed plans are also eligible for capital grants to use for streetscaping, transit-, pedestrian- and bicycle-oriented projects, and transportation-related strategies to revitalize downtowns and neighborhoods.

But even more interesting is the new Housing Incentive Program (HIP), which awards local jurisdictions that locate compact housing within a third of a mile of transit \$1,000 per bedroom for 25 units per acre, \$1,500 per bedroom for 40 units per acre, and \$2,000 per bedroom for 60 units per acre. Affordable units earn an additional \$500 per bedroom. The funding, which is from the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program, can be used for transportation projects anywhere within the local jurisdiction as

long as they are consistent with the goals of the TLC program. MTC's program was modeled after a much-lauded HIP program in nearby San Mateo County. Efforts to get a similar program enacted statewide fell through when California's energy crisis derailed almost every initiative that wasn't energy-related, especially those requiring funding.

California Treasurer Phil Angelides, an ardent and outspoken supporter of smart growth and himself a former developer who in the early '80s experimented with New Urbanism, has also provided significant incentives. He's incorporated smart growth and community reinvestment into the investment criteria used by the state's Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank, and by the two huge state employee pension funds. Even more significantly for affordable housing projects, the state's Debt Limit Allocation Committee, which awards tax credits to affordable housing projects, uses the same criteria.

The fact that inclusionary zoning ordinances have been adopted in a third of all Bay Area communities -- requiring that 10-20 percent of all new housing units be affordable -- and that inclusionary rules are in effect in all redevelopment districts, has provided further stimulus for affordable housing construction. The housing shortage has been exacerbated by Proposition 13, an initiative passed by voters in 1978 that limited property tax increases and forced municipalities to encourage revenue-generating commercial development instead of residential.

Helping out in Oakland is a progressive mayor, former California Governor Jerry Brown, who has created a "10K Housing Program" to encourage construction of 10,000 new residential units downtown, with TOD as the main strategy for achieving that goal. Oakland's zoning code is being revamped, and will include a special TOD overlay zone. The city is also working extensively with neighborhoods to develop four transit villages, the most eagerly anticipated of which is at the Fruitvale BART station, where the Spanish-speaking Unity Council has planned a mixed-use development that includes a health clinic, child care, a community center, a plaza and other public space, and a lot of affordable housing.

"The mayor and the city council are putting considerable effort into pushing densities and affordable housing and getting the right mix of uses," says Natalie Faye of Oakland's Planning Department. "They're doing this even

though we still have to court developers. We're not like San Francisco where developers are beating down the door to get in."

**B**ut if there are greater opportunities and greater numbers of TOD projects in the Bay Area, there seem to be even more problems. NIMBY opposition to projects can be expected, especially in more suburban locations, and especially if the projects push densities, reduce parking, include affordable housing, or take away parking. The Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), which is governed by a board of locally elected representatives, many of whom represent the suburbs, has always surrounded its suburban stations with parking lots, much to the dismay of TOD advocates.

This has ended up working to BART's advantage, with the parking lots serving as land banks for TOD projects in a hot real estate market where it no longer makes sense to devote the land to parking. But the BART policy of replacing any parking that is removed, space for space, has made these developments extra expensive. Oftentimes the cost of building a parking structure in order to make space for TOD is more than the value of the land, and there is resistance to using public subsidies -- the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program is one controversial source -- to provide parking.

There have been many unsuccessful attempts to do away with the parking replacement policy, and offer improved transit access to stations instead. Adding impetus to these efforts is the fact that with BART's extension to the airport opening soon it is likely that every BART lot will become satellite parking for the airport -- a prospect that is likely to dampen community enthusiasm for them.

"There's been a lot of movement on this issue because of the airport extension," says BART's Peter Albert. "The BART that built parking lots was the old BART. The new BART is trying new things." These include promoting shuttle service to stations in more suburban locations, limiting long-term parking, charging for parking, improving transit connections and cab service. Most interesting is station car projects at two stations, one of which is operated by Hertz, and a car-sharing program that plans to locate community-owned cars near five BART stations. CarShare already has 600 members in San Francisco and Oakland. "The market may be solving the

parking problem,” says Albert. “Because quite simply it’s no longer feasible to provide free parking.”

Parking is always a hotly contested issue, though it has not caused the problems in the Bay Area that it has in Atlanta, probably because urban and TOD parking requirements are typically very low: ranging from a low parking maximum (and no minimum) of one space per four housing units in San Francisco to a maximum of one space per unit in Oakland and all the way up to 20 percent reductions to standard parking ratios at suburban locations. But new projects are pushing the envelope with parking; a new mixed-use TOD called Gaia in Berkeley, for example, was built with no parking whatsoever; the developer had agreed to provide a community room instead.

But there are the other kinds of problems that result from putting together complicated deals for complex projects involving partnerships that include public, for-profit and non-profit entities -- each of which may have distinct and perhaps conflicting goals. Affordable housing providers often find themselves with the additional financing problem of having to make concessions to lenders because they cannot use the land -- typically owned by the transit agency -- to securitize the loan, since the transit agency will typically be unwilling to subordinate their interest. Or the transit agency will want to get full value from the development of its land, while the city in which the station is located may want affordable housing.

Says Bridge Housing’s David Slarskey, “Each time you layer on another goal -- whether it’s affordable housing, or some redevelopment objective, or paying a living wage, or transit-orientation -- you come out with another set of variables. Meantime you’re moving on this inexorable time line while windows of opportunity are opening and shutting and you can’t move. Greenfield development, in contrast, must be incredibly easy -- it’s private land, private money, and the developer builds whatever they want. You have to understand why it’s so attractive to developers.”

**O**f course there’s no one solution to the challenge of bringing TOD to scale as a nationally recognized trend in development. More money for planning is necessary -- some would suggest that it come off the top of state transportation funding. Developers suggest that more money be made available for pre-development work, and master environmental impact

reports that could help streamline the approval process for projects involving several components, like affordable housing, which are likely to encounter opposition. They'd also like more funding for the public infrastructure that's required -- including streetscaping, pedestrian amenities, public plazas and benches.

VTA's Grieg Asher suggests that stations areas be defined as "critical habitats" that require planning activity as a matter of course. Once the planning is completed, he suggests, perhaps the station areas could be pre-approved for particular types of development. Maybe there could also be pre-approved funding, or at least a list of the half dozen lenders who are comfortable with mixed-use and densities. Cities could get more creative and be willing to buy down points on a development or provide other incentives than additional financing. He believes it would also be helpful to have a set of models appropriate to a given station type, which could be shown to a developer who doesn't understand TOD.

"The best arrangement, obviously, would be if there was a city or transit agency employee available -- as there is in Portland -- to walk a developer through the process of doing a TOD," says Asher. "Someone who could say, 'No problem, here's a design palette of what your project could look like and here's a list of lenders who may be interested in financing it, and we'll help you put together a pro forma. And if somebody could help with land assemblage -- cities and transit agencies don't actually go out there and help put projects together, they just react to projects that are proposed -- somebody who was available to work one deal after another, then we might see some significant movement."

The Planning and Conservation League, which has packaged several successful environmental initiatives for the ballot, including Proposition 116 in 1990 that provided \$2 billion for public transit, is readying a 2002 measure to fund 18 categories of projects, including TOD. The funding source would be the state's sales tax on new cars; \$180 million annually would fund statewide the public benefit parts of TOD projects. But PCL's Eddie Moore says TOD is the one provision of the measure that has failed to elicit much excitement. "There's no TOD lobby yet," he says. "Individual developers are interested in individual projects, not in passing state legislation, and the home building industry sure isn't interested."

“What we really need to bring TOD to scale nationally is a few success stories to show the capital market that they can actually make more money on well-thought-out projects -- because there’s more value in these urban infill sites,” says developer Michael Dieden, who is working on projects in Oakland and in Los Angeles. “The capital guys need to see it over and over again. They look at life out of the rearview mirror, never through the windshield. Capitalism is amoral. It will go where the money is.”

## **CHICAGO: NATURALLY OCCURRING TOD**

**I**n marked contrast to the enthusiasm and activity around TOD in the Bay Area, the sentiment in Chicago is that TOD is kind of “old hat.” TOD is happening all around the region’s 380 rail stations in both urban and suburban settings, it’s just that few people call it that. Chicago has been doing transit-oriented development since the 1850s, first around horse-drawn trolleys, then around the streetcars and the seven heavy rail lines that transported both passengers and freight, and then around the Chicago Transit Authority’s seven lines. Metra, which took over passenger service on all seven commercial lines in the ‘70s, offers what is perhaps the best commuter service in the U.S.

Rail is what made the city great in the 1800s, and the neighborhoods that grew up around it are about as good as neighborhoods get, densely populated but comfortable, walkable, with fine architecture, ample parks, big trees, street life. Seventy-six Metra stations are more than 50 years old; a dozen were built before 1850. People never really stopped using transit. Eighty-five percent of those who work in downtown Chicago get there by transit even though 75 percent of them own cars; citywide the mode split is 55-60 percent. A recent study for Metra shows that people will walk three-quarters of a mile to the train station, even in the winter.

The city went through the same reversal of fortunes as other big cities in the ‘70s and ‘80s, but as in Atlanta, the people and the developers have come back to the downtown and older suburbs that are rich with public transit. “We’ve got transit-oriented development, we just don’t know it,” says Peter Skosey of the Metropolitan Planning Council. “Ninety-nine percent of people don’t know what TOD is -- but just look at where they choose to live. We’ve done focus groups and it’s what everyone wants -- affluent people,

poor people -- nobody wants to get on a bus after they get off the train, and they don't want to get in the car to get a tube of toothpaste or a quart of milk."

But the fact that so many people take the transit-orientation for granted, or don't understand why Chicago's neighborhoods are great, is dangerous, he says. Because in the past decade the new wave of development has threatened to suburbanize Chicago, with corner stores coming down to be replaced by drive-through restaurants and stand-alone grocery stores fronted by parking lots.

Fortunately, the city is revising its zoning code -- for the first time in 50 years -- and the hope is that policies can be put in place that will reinforce the existing urban fabric. The city is considering a transit-oriented development overlay zone to be applied within several hundred feet of a station; neighborhoods are so densely populated that the standard quarter-mile circle would be too deep. The overlay zone would require mixed-use, higher densities and limited parking. "The point is to make it easier to do TOD," says Skosey. "Under this code you need a variance to do TOD. If zoning wasn't a barrier, the market would build the right thing."

It is hoped the update can also help refocus Chicago's attenuated commercial districts, which typically stretch the length of arterials -- many of them built up when streetcars ran the length of the street. The streetcars were replaced by the rail system, which prompted nodal development, and because the market can no longer support retail all along these corridors, there are many empty storefronts. There is interest in a more flexible code that would allow residential above retail, and residential on the ground floor if the buildings are further from a station or designated node.

But if Chicago and its inner ring suburbs for the most part comprise what is one of the best examples of a large and livable urban TOD in the U.S., there's a bigger problem on the horizon. Chicago's transit system is not like Manhattan's, with a subway stop on every block, and some worry that the transit system is reaching the limits of what it can do to move people around downtown. Meantime, Metra is building stations further and further out into territory where farmland is \$12,000-an-acre cheap and there are no natural boundaries.

“We’re at the point where we need to reinforce other community centers. If you’ve got good transit you’ll get good transit-oriented development, but the real test is what’s happening at newer Metra stations where there’s a real lack of policy,” worries Frank Beal of Chicago’s Metropolis 2020. “That’s where we need to focus our attention. Not where the stop is 100 years old and the town was TOD to begin with. We shouldn’t build a stop unless the appropriate policies and zoning are in place to support that investment. But only Portland has dared to make the transportation investment contingent on appropriate land use.”

Chicago has been doing TOD for so long that it’s a good laboratory for examining what works best. The older suburbs of Arlington Heights and Evanston are two of 15 cities that were awarded TOD planning grants from the Regional Transportation Authority, and along with places like Oak Park and Elmhurst are examples of successful TOD that people often cite. But unlike Oak Park and Elmhurst, Arlington Heights and Evanston have greatly increased densities. And if controversy about TOD in other cities is often focused on parking, in Chicago debate is tilted more toward the question of how much density is too much.

Arlington Heights Mayor Arlene Mulder became something of a celebrity by using high-density transit-oriented development to bring about the highly successful economic revitalization of a downtown that was dead. The pleasant city of Evanston, just north of downtown Chicago, is an exceptionally transit-rich suburb with the largest concentration of rail and bus service outside of downtown Chicago. It has seen an extraordinary amount of TOD, including the construction of 1,000 residential units in high-rise buildings within a three block area, and a lot of new commercial all within walking distance of transit. There are about 75 restaurants.

The story of Mayor Mulder and how she persisted in doing the right thing, eventually triumphing over an array of obstacles, has won her admiration in all quarters. Still, critics of TOD in Chicago use Arlington Heights and Evanston to illustrate what they say is a misplaced belief that density, especially density in a more suburban setting, is the key to success. “The belief in high densities and complex mega-structures is unjustified and needs to be questioned,” says architect Steven Friedman. “And it exceeds the economics of most suburban development.” He is among those who worry

that using Arlington Heights as the TOD poster child scares many other suburban communities away.

Architect Tom Forman's critique is more subjective: "When you walk around among all these high rises it's a little like walking on a board full of giant chess pieces. There's a big building, then lots of little people, then a big parking structure, and lots of little people, then another big building. There's no context. It's sort of like a TOD spaceship has landed in the middle of a community. It's a basic tenet of TOD that you need to get a lot of people to live near the train station, but you have to do it right and pay close attention to the point at which density begins to change the character of a place."

More important than density, says Friedman, is creating walkable streets and community life proximate to the station so that people have a reason to be there -- because if they are there, they'll use transit. "Success is really a function of destinations and the character of the origination," he says. "The dirty little lie is that the easiest way to increase transit ridership is to build lots of parking. But the cheapest way by far is to build communities where people walk."

Forman adds it's essential to recognize and build upon a community's assets. He prefers the more organic transit-oriented development that he says is taking place all over the city as young people move into older neighborhoods. The rail station, he says, is typically the agent of change, and the vantage point from which you can observe the transformation.

He talks about the example of one station adjacent to an old Chinese restaurant and surrounded by several boarded up storefronts, three- and four-story apartment buildings, and a park ringed by small bungalows -- all the elements of TOD minus the economic activity. He watched out the train window as the housing stock was revitalized, and a French bakery opened in one storefront, and then a drycleaner in another. Then the old Chinese restaurant was taken over by new, young Chinese owners who obviously bought their tables and chairs at someplace like Ikea. Then pretty soon people were playing with their children in the park. "Then, bingo, the ultimate triumph -- a Starbucks," says Forman. "Now that's transit-oriented development."

Scott Bernstein of the Center for Neighborhood Technology says the question is not really whether there should be high densities or how parking is handled but whether the development “adds value to the community.” “TOD has to be about people,” he says. “It has to be thought through. People need to be able to walk to the train, but we also need to make sure there’s good train service. It’s not just about density, because that’s only an origin and has nothing to do with destinations. There’s definitely something to be learned from naturally occurring TOD. And we have to ask why there isn’t more of it.”

The market has favored Chicago’s more affluent north and northeast neighborhoods, and has not come to lower-income neighborhoods, especially on Chicago’s south and west sides, though it’s getting close. A block away from the notorious Cabrini Green public housing project in a low-income neighborhood just north of downtown, at a stop once deemed life threatening, one-bedroom condos sell for \$250,000, and immediately to the north is Chicago’s hottest real estate market. Cabrini Green is being torn down, to be replaced by a development that is to illustrate the transformation of public housing policy. Public housing projects everywhere are to be replaced with New Urbanist-style developments that mix uses and incomes.

Cabrini Green is one location where there is likely to be interesting development; there’s another public housing project in Bronzeville to the south. But architect Kevin Pierce points out that “New Urbanist” isn’t always “transit-oriented.” “One would hope, of course, that these new developments will be transit-oriented. But will they? I would guess not,” he says. Part of the problem is that many lower-income neighborhoods don’t recognize public transit as an asset, but rather associate it with crime and drugs. There is an alderman on the south side who had the train station in his district torn down, Pierce says, believing it to be a catalyst for problems.

But in Bronzeville, an historic African American community slightly southwest, downtown revitalization plans hinge on mixed-use TOD, to be anchored at either end by New Urbanist developments on the sites of what used to be public housing projects. There are two train stations and lots of bus service. “It absolutely could be more or less TOD,” says Pierce. But he notes that when a new police headquarters was built recently in the neighborhood, adjacent to the two train lines, it included an 800-car parking lot.

Problems with land assemblage also make these projects difficult, because even if there are empty lots, they are rarely large enough or configured in such a way as to allow for development. The Chicago Transit Authority owns considerable land near train stations, but is reluctant to transfer it. “Development is all about timing. If you can’t assemble the land, then you can’t tell the developer when he can build on it, and you can’t sign leases until you begin construction,” says Ted Wysocki of the Association of Neighborhood Developers. “And I don’t know which is worse -- having to work with the CTA or to negotiate with 20 different property owners.”

Whether TOD can be used to revitalize other communities that have experienced disinvestment, population decline and which are dotted with empty storefronts and vacant lots depends heavily on the market, says architect Les Pollock, who did a study about TOD opportunities along the Green Line in the mid-’90s when the Chicago Transit Authority was rebuilding it. “TOD isn’t magic -- you need the market,” he says. “But around Cabrini Green the market is looking for a location, it just hasn’t found one yet.” Adds Ellen Shubart of the Metropolitan Planning Council, “It’s going to happen in inner city neighborhoods -- as long as there’s no recession -- if only because of the pressure to supply more housing.”

## **DENVER: EVOLUTIONARY TOD**

**B**ecause Denver has only a skeletal rail system in place, most of which travels through largely industrial areas before arriving downtown, transit-oriented development is still more a good idea than a reality. But as in other downtowns where business is booming, transit is present, and there is zoning in place designed to encourage activity on the street, much of the development that’s occurring is transit-oriented, if by default more than by design.

And downtown Denver is booming in a way that offers tremendous potential to change the city’s image as a raw, dusty, Wild Western cow town, and public transit and pedestrian activity will be key. The Central Corridor light rail line travels through the downtown, and the Central Platte Valley Spur will open next year. But it’s the 20-year-old 16th Street Mall, with its free and frequent shuttle service and bus stations anchoring either end -- with one

station offering high-quality express bus service to Boulder -- that is the center of the action.

This mile-long stretch of businesses, shops, restaurants and lofts -- bisected by light rail line and the open-air Denver Pavilions mall and movie-theater complex -- traverses the length of the central business district and is jumping with activity. Shuttle drivers used to joke that they could take their clothes off and run down the mall naked without any complaints, but now the mall is populated, sometimes elbow-to-elbow, 18 hours a day, and 53,000 riders use the shuttle service.

There's new housing and office space with ground-floor retail uses going in all around this walkable and transit-rich area, ever since the Mayor Wallington Webb began trying to convince people to move downtown and succeeded. The number of residents has increased from 1,500 in 1990 to 4,500 today. But the potential for further transformation of Denver, given the projects either under construction or in planning, is staggering:

The 16th Street Mall is directly adjacent to hyper-hip LoDo loft district and will be extended three blocks to Denver's Union Station, which is slated to become a multi-modal transit hub and mixed-use commercial and entertainment complex. Union Station is adjacent to the Commons, a 50-acre former rail yard that is being developed as a mixed-use project with 3,000 units of housing and 4 million square feet of commercial. The Commons, which is under construction, will extend downtown Denver out to the South Platte River and a 30-acre riverside park that's already in place, and will provide excellent pedestrian access to both Union Station and the 16th Street Mall.

This is happening in an area that's already destination-rich. To the northeast is Coors Field. Southwest along the Central Platte Valley spur is the Auraria campus with its three colleges, the Broncos stadium, Pepsi Center, a children's museum, Elitch's/Six Flags amusement park and an impressive REI flagship store. In between Auraria and the 16th Street Mall is the soon-to-be-expanded convention center, and the very successful Performing Arts Center. Further to the northeast is the Welton Street Corridor and Five Points, an historic African American neighborhood with a public housing project scheduled to be redeveloped as mixed-income and mixed-use. Both areas, which had been struggling, are served by light rail and are beginning

to see spillover economic development, especially housing, and affordable housing in mixed-use complexes.

While the rest of Denver struggles with auto-dependency and sprawl, downtown is becoming an urban center. Transit ridership into downtown has spiked, going from a 20-25 percent modal split for work trips, with 10 percent walking or biking, to 35 percent in just two years. Ridership on light rail has exceeded expectations, already reaching 2025 projections.

“The 16th Street Mall was built when nobody had even heard of TOD. Now TOD is a buzzword, but back when we started redeveloping downtown this was just the kind of development that made good common sense,” says Brendan Harrington of the Downtown Denver Partnership. “The mayor got the ball rolling, and he’s put in place city staff that is keenly interested in and working on TOD. But I don’t think I’ve ever actually heard him call it TOD.”

In part because of concerns about air quality -- a severe problem in the Central Platte Valley adjacent downtown -- parking maximums, but no minimums, are in effect downtown, and parking will be very limited at the Union Station and the Commons developments. Downtown zoning also encourages retail on the ground level, a pedestrian friendly environment, and mixed use. “It wasn’t that we were interested in transit-oriented development so much as we were interested in doing anything that might stimulate some pedestrian activity and generate sales taxes,” says Marianne LeClair of the Denver Urban Renewal Authority, which has, like other city agencies, been encouraging TOD. “Downtown is very transit-supportive and very pedestrian friendly -- which are, you know, one and the same thing.”

**T**he only “out of the ground” transit-oriented development project in Denver that fits the common conception of TOD as a mixed-use mega-project is the Englewood City Center ten miles south of downtown on the site of what used to be the Cinderella City Mall, once the largest mall west of the Mississippi. This development is another success story illustrating how perseverance and vision on the part of city staff and courage on the part of elected officials can triumph over seemingly impossible odds. And it illustrates what many in Denver describe as an “evolutionary TOD” project. John Parr of the Center for Regional and Neighborhood Action was a tireless

proponent of the project, and he thinks it is proving to be a bellwether for a coming TOD trend across the Denver region.

The Englewood City Center, a mix of retail and office space, 450 units of residential, gridded streets, and a City Hall, library, museum, park and open space, is located on 55 acres on a prime corner of downtown Englewood adjacent to the Southwest rail station. It stretches the definition of TOD, with a Wall-Mart that's surrounded by a vast parking lot with a ratio of 4.9 spaces per 1,000 square feet of retail space, and several stand-alone stores and restaurants each with their own parking lots at ratios of 6 per 1,000 square feet. Moreover it's surrounded on one side by a nine-foot-tall brick wall that had to be constructed as a sound barrier to shield neighborhoods from an extra-busy bus transfer center. The project is partly occupied but a year away from completion.

“The project has effected a tremendous transformation in Englewood,” says Kelly Nordini of the Transit Alliance, a non-profit coalition of local governments, business and citizen groups. “The mall was a big, dead monstrosity surrounded by huge, empty parking lots in what is the middle of a busy city. This success is evidence of what light rail can do.”

The project will accommodate the lower-middle-class community's immediate need for sales tax revenue and desire for a general merchandiser, as well as the high parking ratios required to sell the development. But buildings were built out to the street with the parking arranged in the interior so that at a later phase of development the parking lots can be built upon in order to densify the project, and parking can be moved into a parking structure, without getting in the way of the buildings that are already there. Moreover, it's all walkable, all within a half mile of the train station, and there will be shuttle service between the station and employment centers two miles to the east.

“It isn't as integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods as I had wanted, and yes there is a lot of parking, but in seven to ten years it's likely that Wall-Mart will cease to exist,” says Englewood Community Development Director Bob Simpson, who championed the project from the very beginning, when the only developer proposal on the table was for a big box retail center. “And then we can just build something else. You have to think of this project as an evolution, and this is just the beginning.”

Scott Woodard of the Denver Regional Council of Governments says that he believes the Englewood TOD illustrates one possible way to adapt TOD to the suburbs. “Local jurisdictions are dependent on sales taxes, they’re highly competitive, but they’re also beginning to realize the temporary nature of big box retail, which has a life of less than 10 years. They’re beginning to understand that mixed-use may be a better way to go. Englewood is an evolutionary and very attractive approach.”

**I**t is mixed-use and New Urbanist -- and not transit-oriented -- development that most of the region is talking about, because there is only minimal rail transit. There really is only one rail line -- the Central Corridor becomes the Southwest Corridor -- which is comprised of just 20 stations along 15 miles. The Central Platte Valley Spur is just 1.6 miles, and four stations, long. “People still aren’t sold on public transit,” says Marianne LeClair of Denver’s Urban Renewal Agency. “They say that’s fine, but there’s not enough of it. Most people who live here probably never even see a train go by. So it’s hard for them to understand, or even think about, transit-oriented development.”

Construction will begin soon on the 19-mile-long Southeast corridor, which was funded as a joint highway widening project. The Denver Regional Transit District has proposed six other lines in its full-build-out scenario. Proponents of each project are jockeying for position, with an increase of the sales tax measure that currently funds the rail system likely to go on the ballot next year or the year following.

Meantime, the RTD’s TOD point person, Marilee Utter -- formerly with Trillium, the development company that owned the land on which the Commons is being built -- is opening her one-stop shop for developers in a building that’s been provided by the contractor building the Southeast Line. She’s busy, with 25 TOD projects in various stages of planning. While she came in too late to do much besides retrofit the Southwest Line, she’s determined to be ahead of the curve in terms of planning with communities along the Southeast Line. “This office is intended to announce to the world that ‘Hey everybody, the RTD is in the real estate business,’” she says.

She’s determined to be even further ahead with the proposed rail lines. Along with the environmental impact statements for each corridor she is

completing separate land use studies to compare the uses that are likely to occur with each of the proposed alignments. “The Southwest line was the cheapest right of way, but not the best one for encouraging TOD,” she says. “These lines have more potential, and we are working with communities, looking at each station, and I am searching for places where I can leverage funding, or other powers and authority like eminent domain.”

The City of Denver, which has heavily supported TOD and conducted an ambitious station area planning program, is also looking for ways to link transportation to land use. The city’s transportation and land use update is dividing neighborhoods into two categories: “areas of stability” and “areas of change,” with the latter to be targeted for significant public investments including transportation improvements and stations and parks. The Denver Regional Council of Governments has taken a first step toward linking transportation and land use as well. Cities that adopt urban growth boundaries get extra points in the transportation improvement program.

Utter wishes points would be awarded for communities that agree to do mixed-use or transit-oriented development; Woodard from DRCOG thinks this would be a good idea, too, though difficult politically. “We’ve talked a lot about urban growth boundaries but we haven’t talked much about what to do inside the boundaries. And we’ve directed all our attention to the high-growth suburbs as opposed to inner-ring suburbs and low-growth communities. When communities hear about TOD they say ‘Cool. But can we get transit?’ Otherwise it doesn’t apply.”

## CONCLUSION

The most intriguing aspect of transit-oriented development is that it is a multi-faceted tool that is not just about housing but also about transportation, economic development, more efficient land-use patterns and infrastructure investment, and even about providing support for families. During the past 50 years we have moved away from this sort of interdisciplinary approach to problem-solving and city-building, instead thinking about transportation as separate from land use, and both as separate from social issues. So too profit-making has been thought of as separate from and sometimes opposed to community-building. But we are in the midst of a paradigm shift to a more integrated way of approaching problems

and their solutions, and there is no better illustration of this approach than transit-oriented development.

Says developer Michael Dieden: “In the early part of the last century many of the true visionaries -- and they were really caring people -- were town-builders. That was before the word ‘development’ came about, and before the corporatization of real estate, which resulted in developers who only do power centers, or strip retail, or apartment buildings. We have to instead come at this by asking the question, ‘Does my project help to build community?’” Grieg Asher of the Valley Transportation Authority in the Bay Area put it similarly, “Transit agencies have to understand they are not just in the business of laying track or operating buses. They also have to be community-building organizations. Or else they won’t need to lay track or operate buses.”

Transit-oriented development is hardly new, as we have seen in Chicago, where it grew organically during the first half of the last century. But during the past 50 years the preferred mode of transit has been the automobile, which has dramatically changed land use patterns. The challenge is to figure out how to go back to the way that it was -- at the same time that we move forward into the 21st century.

### **Lessons learned:**

1) Begin at the beginning. Planning is essential in order to enable all partners to arrive at consensus about what kind of development is needed to help build community -- as opposed to which kind will turn a profit, or increase ridership. A visioning process can help a region or a local jurisdiction arrive at the “why” of transit-oriented development, and to get partners with differing visions on the same page. Since this begins with and ends with the community, any project has to add value to the community. Transit-oriented development is a new concept for most people, and they may be resistant to the idea of increasing densities, reducing parking, mixing uses and including affordable housing. “We’ve found that involving the community in the planning process seems to take longer in the beginning but it saves years at the other end,” says Valley Transportation Authority’s Grieg Asher, who suggests designating station areas as “critical habitats” where planning is done as a matter of course, with funding coming off the top of the state’s transportation funding pot.

2) The market is the impetus for development, and zoning codes, parking ratios and design standards are the best avenue for directing market support to the kind of development that is consistent with a city's vision. Codes and standards must enable the market to support mixed land uses and transit-oriented instead of auto-oriented development. "The point is that we have to make it easier to do TOD," said Peter Skosey of the Metropolitan Planning Commission in Chicago. "Under [existing zoning codes] you need a variance to do TOD. If zoning wasn't a barrier the market would build the right thing." In San Francisco, Urban Ecology's Rachel Peterson agreed: "What we have here are a number of individual projects where the developer has obtained a variance . . . Unfortunately, that doesn't add up to a wave of development." If there weren't so many institutional roadblocks, TOD wouldn't have to be the exception to the rule.

3) Streamline the process for developers and make it more developer-friendly. Several of those interviewed for this paper said that transit agencies and local jurisdictions need to be able to provide more assistance to developers who don't understand transit-oriented development. It was suggested that TOD would be greatly facilitated if station areas could be pre-approved for particular kinds of development, if TOD prototypes suitable for different station area conditions could be made available, and a list of financial institutions that are comfortable funding projects with a mix of uses, higher densities and reduced parking. More money is needed for pre-development work, and for master environmental impact reports that could help streamline the approval process for projects involving several components, including more controversial ones like affordable housing or reduced parking. Portland has provided the most support for TOD efforts, providing staff that works on land assemblage and on putting projects together.

4) Integrate the disciplines of transportation and land use planning. Again, Portland is the leader, and the only region to have done this explicitly, making the transportation investment contingent on the existence of zoning and design standards for land uses that will support the investment. But other cities are experimenting: Denver is awarding more points in the TIP to those jurisdictions that pass urban growth boundaries; and Denver's Regional Transportation District is doing not only environmental impact studies along the proposed routes for new rail corridors but also separate land use studies

to compare the uses that are likely to occur with each of the proposed alignments; this will help determine the route that will yield the best return on the transportation investment. The Bay Area's "Housing Incentive Program" is a very clever way to use the transportation investment to stimulate a desired land use, providing more transportation funding to those jurisdictions that build housing near transit, and upping the bonus if the housing is affordable. And in Atlanta Larry Frank is gathering data to help integrate land use and transportation in the regional transportation planning model. As Asher and Dieden have noted, all partners have to start thinking in terms of building community, or in the grander terms of city-building. The TOD effort is cross-disciplinary by nature: And so Marilee Utter of the Denver Regional Transit District sets up her "one-stop shop" for developers, saying, "This office is intended to announce to the world that 'Hey everybody, the RTD is in the real estate business.'"

5) Tell the success stories. As developer Michael Dieden points out, capital is always a follower and never a leader. If the market sees there is money to be made in transit-oriented development, investment will go there.

6) Keep the pressure on to include affordable housing in TOD projects. Stable, revitalized, equitable neighborhoods provide for people with a mix of incomes. Inclusionary zoning ordinances have been used with great effect in California. But in addition to affordable housing there must also be high-quality education available for children. "TOD will help revitalize inner city neighborhoods because of the pressure to provide more housing," said Frank Beal of Metropolis 2020 in Chicago. "But there will be investment on a community by community basis depending on the quality of the schools in each one."