



Government of the District of Columbia
Anthony A. Williams, Mayor

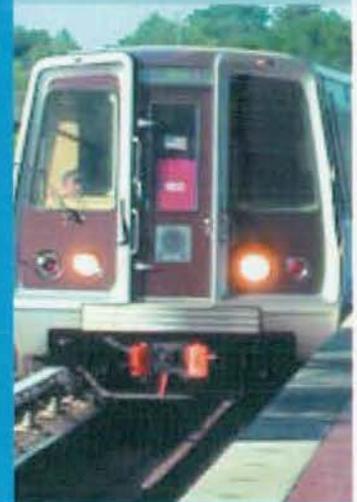


- Mobility
- Housing
- Opportunity
- Environment
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Economic Development

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 06-40

EXHIBIT NO. 14



Trans-Formation:

Recreating Transit-Oriented Neighborhood Centers in Washington D.C.
A DESIGN HANDBOOK for NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.06-40
EXHIBIT NO.14A

TRANS-FORMATION: Recreating Transit-Oriented Neighborhood Centers in Washington D.C.

A DESIGN HANDBOOK FOR NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS

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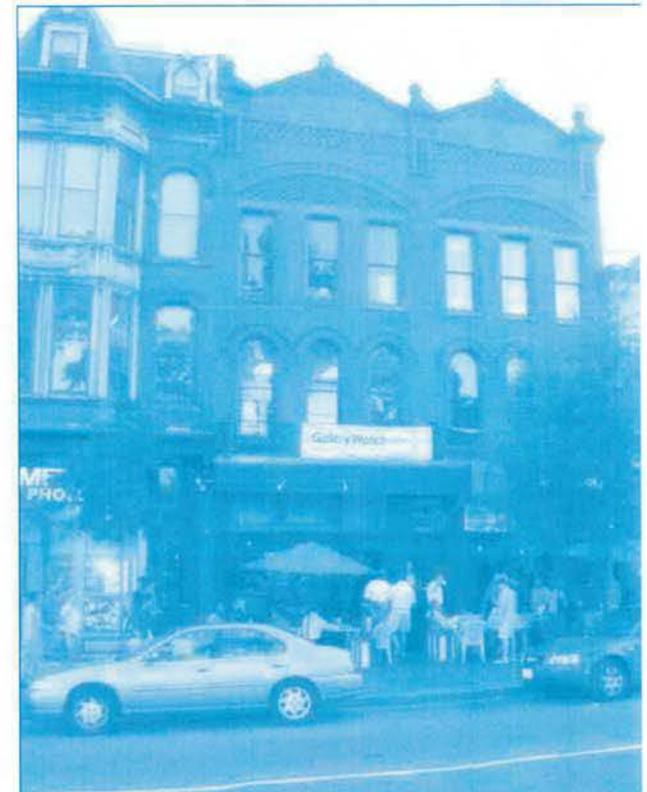
PROJECT PARTNERS

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Washington Regional Network for Livable Communities
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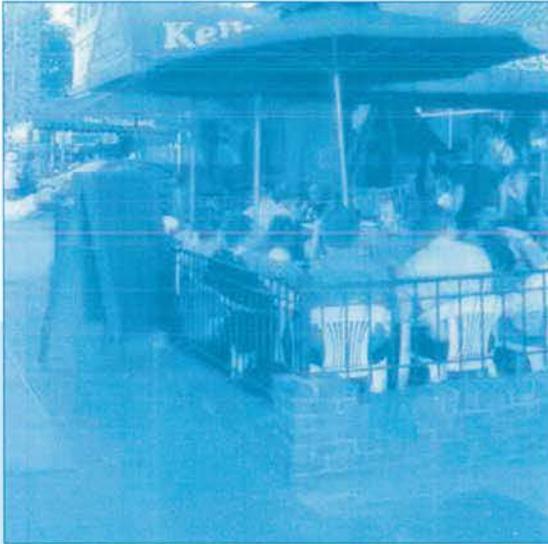
Recreating Transit-Oriented Neighborhood Centers in Washington D.C.

A DESIGN HANDBOOK for NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS

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LETTERS



High-quality transit service is an asset that can be used to achieve other neighborhood priorities such as economic development, housing and safety.

Dear Resident,

Throughout my Administration, I have worked to strengthen our city and improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods. One important way to accomplish both objectives is through transit-oriented development.

Transit-oriented development (TOD) puts development near our transit resources, which gives all District residents easy access to goods, services, employment, education and entertainment without the necessity of owning or driving a private automobile. This strategy can help reduce commuter traffic currently invading our neighborhood streets by both attracting commuters to live in the city and encouraging the use of transit as the preferred mode for moving around the region.

TOD addresses two issues that concern me personally – the strength of our neighborhoods and the protection of the environment. TOD can strengthen already diverse and dynamic neighborhoods by creating strong neighborhood centers that are a center for activity and a source of pride for communities. TOD is also good for the environment by reducing traffic and congestion; therefore, improving air quality and encouraging sustainable development.

I am pleased to present the Trans-Formation Design Guide. I hope you will find it useful in helping to create a unique and sustainable neighborhood center for your community.

Sincerely,
Anthony A. Williams
Mayor

Dear Resident,

I am pleased to present this Trans-Formation Guide, an exciting new product especially for community leaders. This guide will provide you with good information that you can use in thinking about how to utilize our transit resources and potential development projects to strengthen our neighborhoods and meet neighborhood goals.

Community education is the first part of good planning. This guide will give you the tools you need to think about the assets of your neighborhood – particularly transit assets – and begin to create a vision for the kind of neighborhood center you would like to see.

Once you are familiar with the different design components that contribute to the physical environment around a transit station or major bus corridor, you will be in a better position to approach or negotiate with developers in a positive and constructive dialogue to create a superior development that meets both private sector and neighborhood objectives.

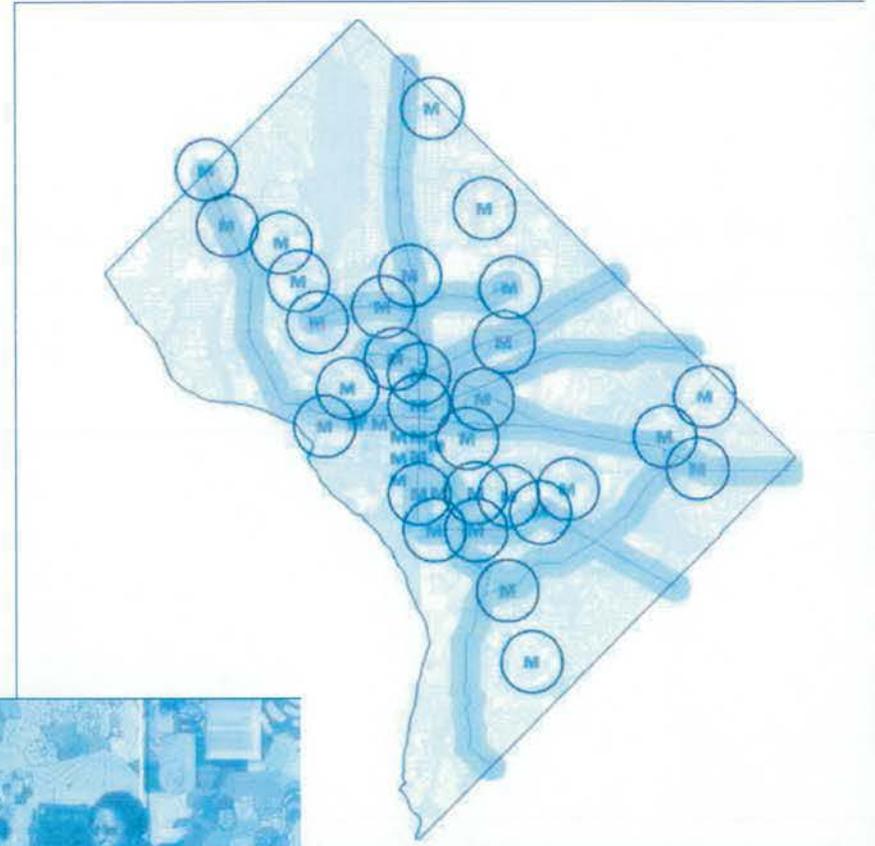
I encourage you to use this guide and share it with others in your neighborhood and stakeholders throughout the District and region and hope you will find it a useful tool in building your community.

Sincerely,
Andrew Altman
Director of Planning

With over 2,000 acres of vacant or abandoned land within a 10 minute walk of excellent transit service, there is a significant opportunity to enhance DC's traditional neighborhood centers without displacement and without threatening existing neighborhoods or historic resources. The region is growing and change is inevitable. At issue is not whether to grow or change, but how and where it occurs.

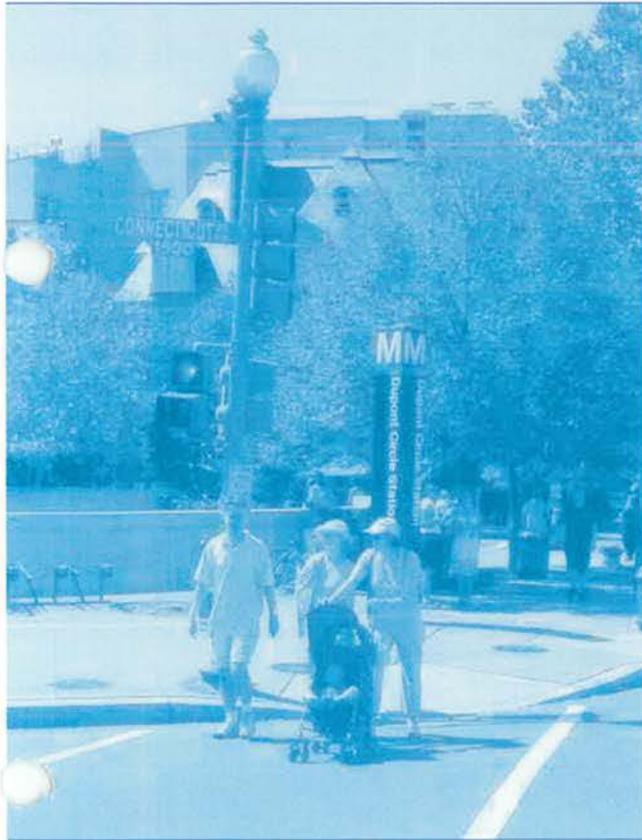
This guidebook is intended to provide tools for managing and guiding change to benefit our communities and create vibrant, successful neighborhood centers organized around transit.

VISION



The District's transit stations and corridors provide an opportunity to create safe, vibrant, and accessible centers for community throughout the city.

PROLOGUE: *WHY READ THIS DESIGN GUIDE?*



WHAT IS THE TRANS-FORMATION DESIGN GUIDEBOOK ABOUT?

Trans-Formation is about maximizing neighborhood potential by refocusing growth around transit assets. This guidebook will provide neighborhood leaders, residents, and other community stakeholders with tools and resources to evaluate, engage, and proactively plan for new development in their communities. The guidebook introduces the concept of "Transit-Oriented Development" or TOD. Generally speaking, transit-oriented development is development that is concentrated around and oriented toward transit stations – either MetroRail stations or major bus stops – and is designed to promote transit-riding.

In this design guide you will learn what transit-oriented development is and how it can benefit existing and emerging District of Columbia neighborhoods. It outlines the important role neighborhood leaders and residents have in evaluating and planning for development projects in their community and provides useful tools to community leaders. This is primarily a policy and design guide that explores in detail the different elements that collectively create strong and lively neighborhood centers anchored and linked together by transit.

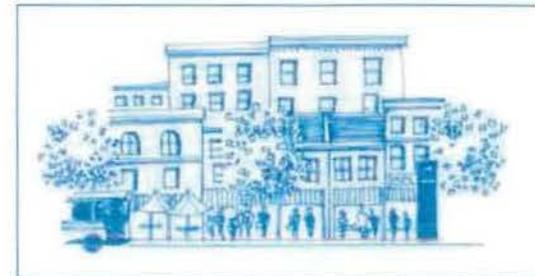
WHO SHOULD USE THE TRANS-FORMATION DESIGN GUIDEBOOK?

This guide is intended to be used by Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners (ANCs), Civic and Citizen Associations, Tenant Association leaders, and other interested and active neighborhood residents. All stakeholders are encouraged to share this document with residents to further the education and dialogue about transit-oriented development at the neighborhood level.

While the guide is primarily aimed at neighborhood residents; developers, development financiers, architects, urban designers, and government officials may also find it useful in engaging community residents in the design of local TOD projects.

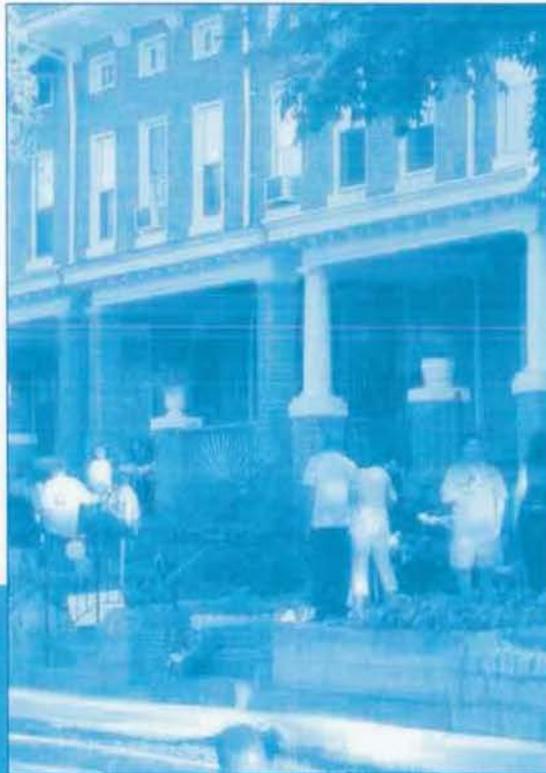
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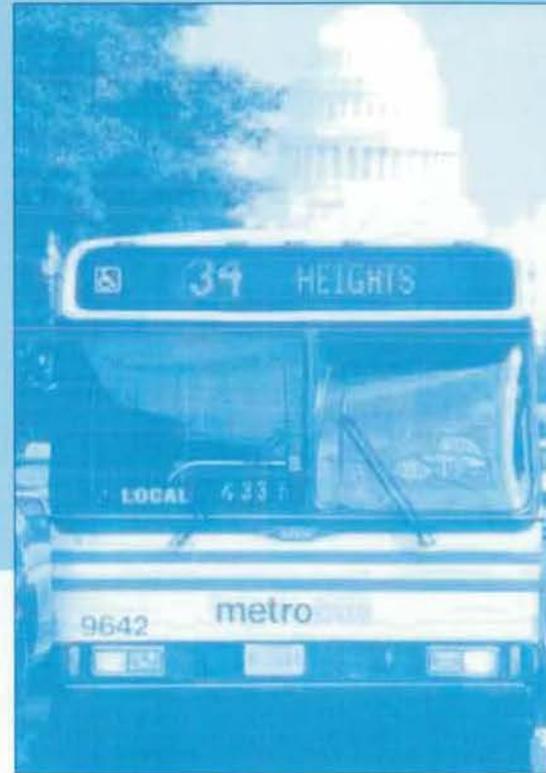




Successful neighborhood centers are convenient by many different modes of transportation including bike, foot, bus, subway, and car.



Transit-oriented development promotes a safe, inviting environment where communities can thrive.



Buses are tremendous assets for neighborhood centers. Approximately 40% of District residents commute by transit—of these over 60% use bus transit compared to 40% who use MetroRail.
Source: WMATA



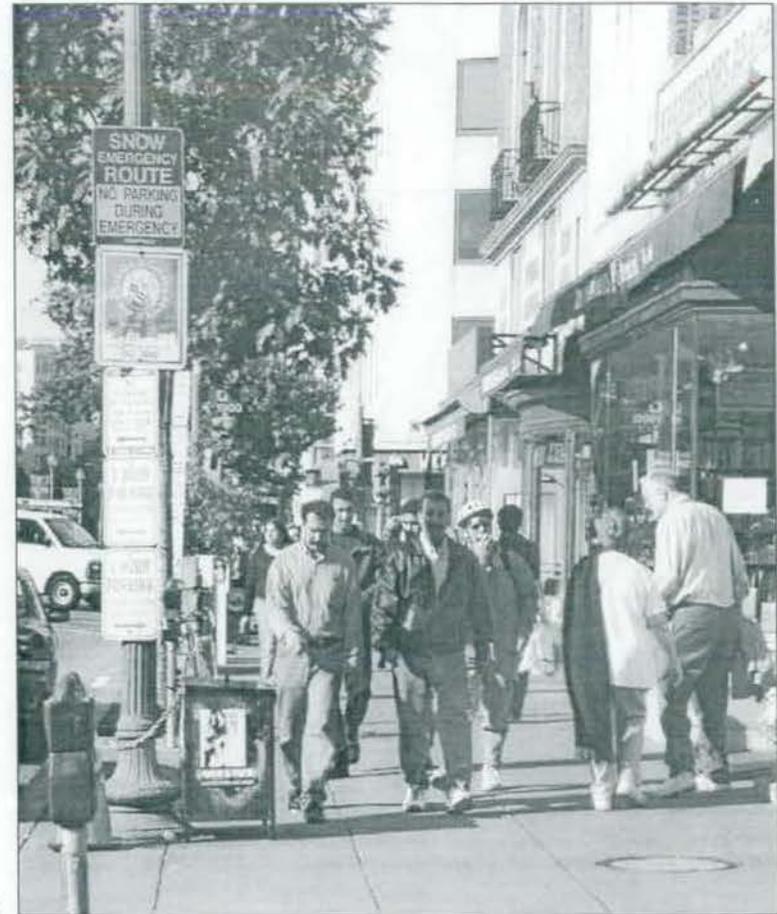
INTRODUCTION:

WHAT IS A TRANSIT-ORIENTED NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER?

In October 2001, Mayor Anthony A. Williams convened a Mayor's Task Force on Transit-Oriented Development. The purpose of the Task Force was to: 1) evaluate the potential of transit-oriented development as a balanced growth strategy for the District of Columbia, 2) explore challenges and opportunities for TOD in the city, and 3) propose viable recommendations for implementation.

The Task Force represented a cross-section of stakeholders: residents, ANC Commissioners, activists, local and regional agencies, developers, market analysts, academics, and national government partners. In addition, focus groups met to test recommendations and provide input from specific groups including local neighborhood leaders, neighborhood business entrepreneurs, and local for-profit and not-for-profit developers.

Both the Task Force and focus groups agreed on a common idea: that areas around major transit resources offer a unique opportunity to create (or recreate) unique neighborhood centers that serve the needs of the District's neighborhood residents.



A vibrant pedestrian environment promotes neighborhood activity and a positive community identity.

Source: Washington Regional Network for Livable Communities

"Transit-Oriented Development in the District of Columbia is a land use strategy to accommodate new growth, strengthen neighborhoods, expand choices and opportunities by capitalizing on bus and rail assets to stimulate and support vibrant, compact, diverse and accessible neighborhood centers within an easy walk of transit."

— Mayor's Task Force on
Transit Oriented Development (2002)

WHAT IS A "TRANSIT-ORIENTED NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER"?

As with other types of centers, transit-oriented centers are the nucleus of a neighborhood. Increased intensity of activity makes the center a dynamic place that draws community and visitors to socialize, shop, live and interact. The vitality of the center depends on the mix of activities and number of people using the area.

Neighborhood centers represent the distinctive character of the community and create a sense of place and source of pride to residents.

Whether entering the center by bus, train, bike, foot or car, the identity of the neighborhood is immediately recognizable and the traveler knows at once that they have arrived at a unique and dynamic place.

Unlike other centers, a transit-oriented center is organized around a transit resource that provides life and linkages to the center. Buildings, landscaping, and public space are all arranged to reinforce and orient activity toward the center and transit. The overall environment is safe and enjoyable and conducive to walking. While automobiles move through the center, the emphasis



Heavy commuter traffic can disturb the quality of life on neighborhood streets. Transit-oriented development is an important strategy to guide growth throughout the region.



BELTWAY BLUES: HOW REGIONAL TRAFFIC IMPACTS NEIGHBORHOOD LIFE

Lying at the center of the metropolitan region, District neighborhoods are acutely affected by regional transportation investment decisions. While discussions about adding freeway lanes in Fairfax County or building transit links across Prince George's County seem to have nothing to do with life in District neighborhoods, in reality **THEY DO!**

Transportation decisions in adjacent jurisdictions affect everything from the economic success of neighborhood commercial areas to local environmental health, from access to major employment centers to safety on neighborhood streets. For these reasons, District residents must participate in and help shape regional transportation investments.

is on pedestrians, bicycles, and transit as preferred modes of travel.

Washington, DC is different from many other places that have adopted TOD as a growth strategy in that both our neighborhoods and our transit system have been in place, in most cases, for over a generation. This condition means that, unlike newer cities or emerging suburban communities, reestablishing transit-oriented neighborhood centers must be accomplished through in-fill projects that adapt to and fit in with the existing community. TOD in Washington, DC, generally speaking, will not be implemented through wholesale change or redesign of a neighborhood. Instead the center will be created incrementally over time as individual development projects are introduced into the community around the transit area.

WHY TOD? WHY NOW?

Transit-oriented development (TOD) is not a new concept. In fact, many District neighborhoods were originally established around trolley lines. Neighborhoods like Tenleytown, Brookland, and Anacostia were DC's original TODs. Transit-oriented development has once again become an important planning strategy. The region is experiencing extremely rapid growth. While this growth has been positive for the regional economy, it has also brought a number of problems: escalating traffic congestion, dangerous regional air quality, polluted waterways, and growing demand for housing and services.

Linked to these regional trends, District neighborhoods have experienced tremendous pressures including neighborhood commercial areas struggling against suburban malls, heavy commuter traffic intruding onto neighborhood streets, environmental pollutants, childhood and senior health issues, and rising housing costs.

Today, market trends, regional conditions, and neighborhood concerns create an opportunity for a new strategy for regional growth. The district is pursuing a TOD policy for the District to achieve regional, municipal and neighborhood benefits including:



The ability to move around the city – to school, stores, and services – is important for all residents, particularly the very young or old who are unable to drive a private vehicle and rely on public transit.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Increased market demand for retail and other neighborhood amenities;
- Increased property values, tax base and economic strength;
- Protection of existing neighborhood character by focusing new development near transit;
- Improved access to jobs and shopping throughout the region.

AIR QUALITY AND TRANSPORTATION IMPACTS

- Reduced necessity for auto trips to access goods, services, and opportunities; therefore, reduced auto emissions;
- Reduced automobile commuter traffic on neighborhood streets;
- Opportunities for increased pedestrian, bicycle, transit activity, and car sharing.

Successful neighborhood centers provide benefits to all members of a community – young singles, families, professionals, and seniors of all income levels.

AFFORDABILITY

- Maximizing land resources for increased housing, employment, and retail opportunities;
- Increased housing opportunities for people at all income levels;
- Increased disposable income by decreasing transportation costs.

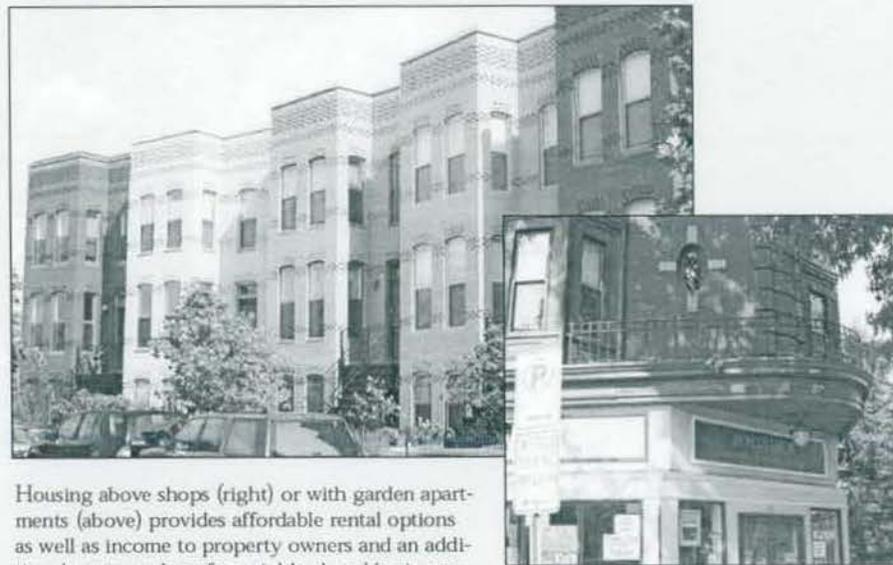
FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Decreased infrastructure costs for road maintenance and construction;
- Increased transit ridership;
- Efficient use of municipal investments;
- Increased return on transit investment.





Planned infill development for the old Wax Museum site at 5th & K Streets, NW includes over 100 units of affordable housing units in the heart of downtown.



Housing above shops (right) or with garden apartments (above) provides affordable rental options as well as income to property owners and an additional customer base for neighborhood businesses.

TRANSIT, AFFORDABILITY, AND OPPORTUNITY

Affordable housing is a critical concern in many District neighborhoods. Increased demand in the local housing market has led to rapidly rising housing and rent prices. Transit areas provide a unique opportunity to improve housing affordability.

The more intense focus at the core of a transit-area means that more housing units of various types and sizes can be provided allowing some to be offered at lower prices that maintains the diversity highly valued in many neighborhoods.

Residential development close to transit can lower both housing and development costs. Transit-accessible areas give households the option not to maintain a private automobile. According to the 2000 Census 37% of District households are without access to an automobile. Whether by choice or due to financial constraints, housing options close to transit means these households can still meet their employment and household needs without the significant expense of purchasing, maintaining, and fueling a private automobile.

Because access to transit gives residents the choice to save money by not owning a private car, this frees up the income that would have gone to car expenses to use in other ways—for example for better housing, education, or other expenses. Developments that encourage the use of transit and reduce the demand for private autos means developers have the opportunity to reduce parking that would otherwise drive up development costs (costs which are eventually transferred to the buyer).

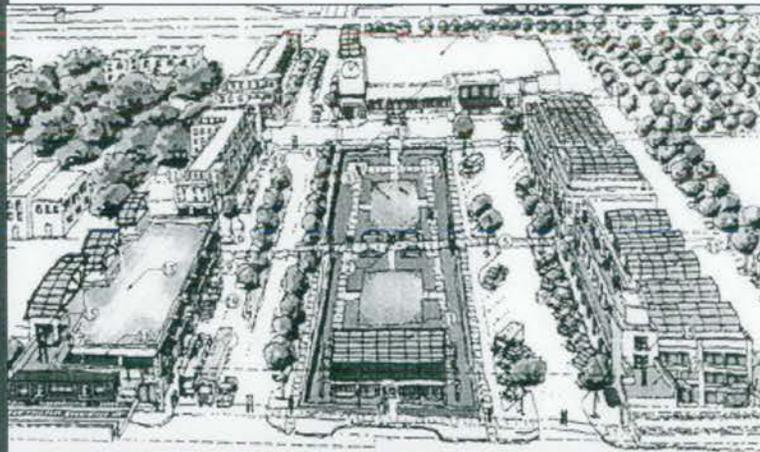
Finally, TOD allows for a variety of housing types such as apartments above stores, English basements, stacked row houses, condominiums, apartment houses, and traditional single family homes. Having more housing means more housing choice and the ability for residents to stay in the same neighborhood from youth through old age.

BETHEL NEW LIFE & WEST GARFIELD PARK

A struggling neighborhood in Chicago's west side was threatened with the removal of the deteriorating transit line that served their community. They organized and crafted a bold and ambitious plan to not only keep the line, but modernize it and use the transit area as a catalyst for the rebirth of their neighborhood.

Bethel New Life, a faith-based community development corporation operating in the West Garfield Park neighborhood of Chicago, led the charge. They proposed two major developments – construction of 50 new affordable market-rate homes and development of a mixed-use transit center that included shops, restaurants, a day care center and an employment office.

Organized and armed with a vision, the community approached the city. A partnership emerged between the community, the City of Chicago, the Transit Authority, and a private design firm. Thanks to local leadership, the neighborhood that grew up and developed around the transit line will soon thrive again because of it.



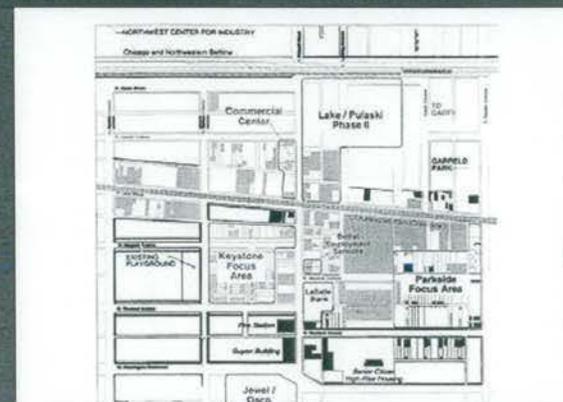
The planned transit center includes health services and extended-hour childcare right at the transit station. The design also includes a green roof. Source: Farr Associates Architecture and Urban Design

Project Highlights:

- Infill development in an existing neighborhood
- Starter housing for young families and senior housing
- 14,000 transit riders per week
- Affordable at \$25,000 median household income

Partners:

- Bethel New Life CDC
- West Garfield Park neighborhood
- Center for Neighborhood Technology
- Chicago Transit Authority
- City of Chicago
- Farr Associates





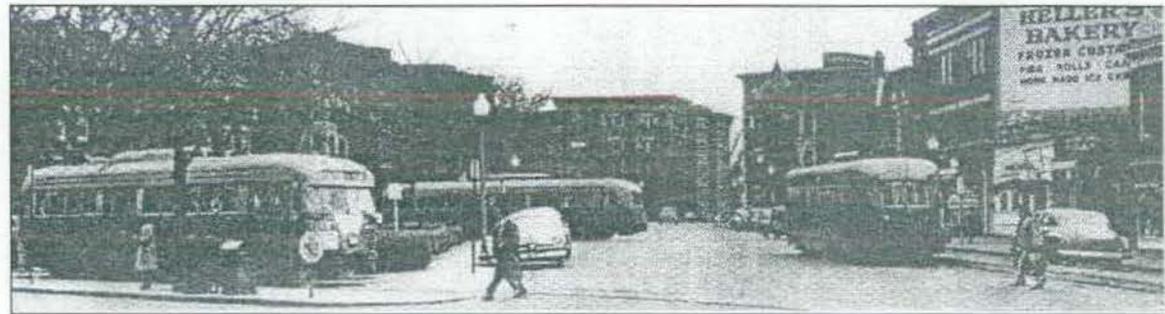
HISTORIC BACKGROUND:

TRANSIT AND HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD GROWTH

The District of Columbia, like most cities, grew and transformed through the influence of transportation. The Nation's Capital was located at the juncture of the Potomac and Anacostia (then Eastern Branch) Rivers because the waterways were the primary mode of transportation in early American history.

With the introduction of streetcars, the city was able to expand beyond the original plan developed by Pierre L'Enfant in 1791. Between 1890 and 1940, the District experienced its most dramatic growth and most of our current neighborhoods were established during this period.

This was the era of the streetcar. Streetcar lines covered the city and provided residents of the District of Columbia their first opportunity to move away from the central city into emerging neighborhoods. At the center of each neighborhood was a central node serviced by the streetcar. These nodes included shops, apartments, houses, parks, plazas, schools and other neighborhood amenities. They evolved into a "mini-downtown" for the many different neighborhoods.

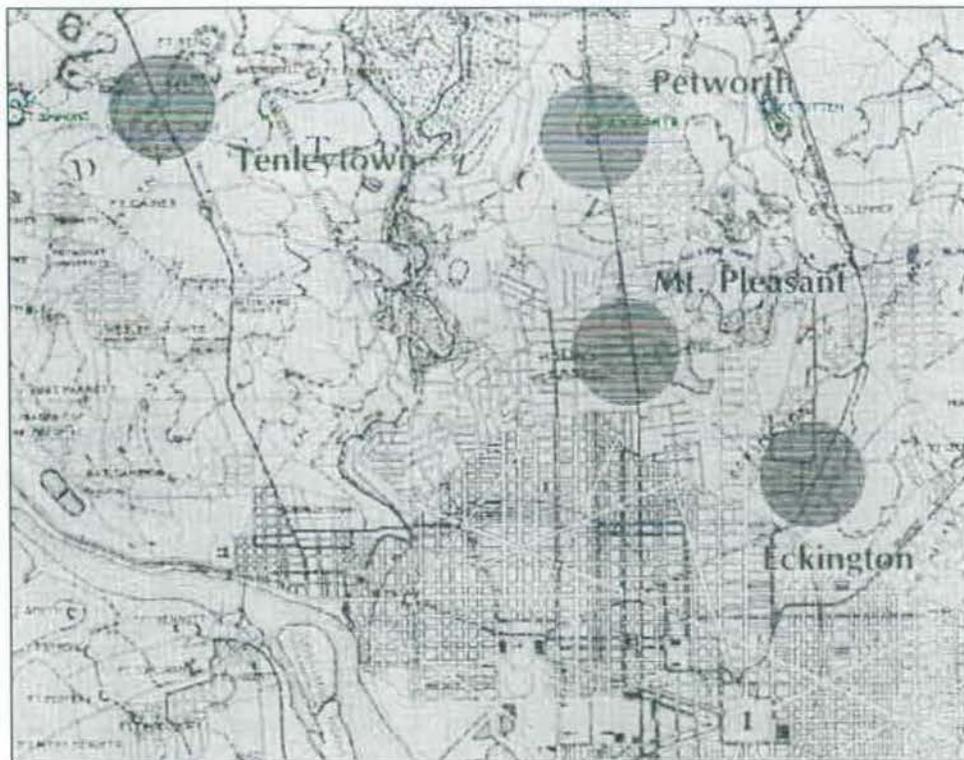


Transit was an integral part of vibrant District neighborhoods. (Mt. Pleasant and Lamont Street, NW—1950)
Source: Washington DC Archives

In the 1950s and 1960s the streetcars were slowly decommissioned and replaced by rubber-tired buses. This signified the dominant role of the automobile in Washington DC that emerged beginning in the 1920's. From the 1970's through today, the private automobile has been assumed the transportation mode of choice. Personal cars meant people were no longer needed to live within walking distance of the streetcar line. They could live anywhere in the region and drive to jobs, shopping, and school. The region spread out and the neighborhood centers faded as workers, shoppers and resi-

dents abandoned them for opportunities in the newly constructed suburbs.

Opened in 1976, the Metro rail system replaced the trolley as the centralizing link to Washington DC services and neighborhoods. The past decade has seen preferences shift back toward compact neighborhoods with characteristic centers. There is rising demand once again for the opportunity to walk instead of having to use a private automobile. Urban living is becoming more popular. People list the "small town feel" of many District neighborhoods as their greatest asset. Today, the challenge is to remember what has been forgotten – that maximizing transit is essential to the appeal and identity of our neighborhoods.



A map of Washington D.C. circa 1892 indicates the emergence of the city's historic neighborhoods along major streetcar lines.
Source: Washington DC Archives

TOD IN HISTORIC DISTRICTS

15 of the 29 MetroRail stations are within or adjacent to a designated historic district. This isn't surprising considering that many of the current transit lines follow the historic routes of old streetcar lines and service the same neighborhoods that grew up around the streetcar stops.

Though historic districts carry with them special provisions for new developments and renovations, that does not mean that historic districts cannot also achieve the goals of transit-oriented development – in fact, in many ways historic neighborhoods are even better suited for TOD which aims to recreate or strengthen traditional neighborhood form and centers.

ANC commissioners, neighborhood residents and historic preservationists should adopt and pursue the design principles presented here when reviewing projects within their historic districts.



Friendship Heights and Wisconsin Avenue trolleys
Source: National Capital Trolley Museum



PRINCIPAL STAKEHOLDERS:

COOPERATING TO CREATE VIBRANT NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS

Community, government, and private investors must all work together to create transit-oriented developments and neighborhood centers that meet each group's individual needs. Seemingly disparate issues must be addressed and balanced. Collaboration, cooperation, and compromise are necessary to get to projects that are financially feasible, community-supportive, and advance District-wide goals. Each group has a stake in the outcome and therefore must be a partner in the planning and development of their common goal: strong, stable, active and vibrant neighborhood centers served by transit.



Community input and planning is necessary to adapt general design principles into specific strategies for unique neighborhood areas.

COMMUNITY

Because community members live in the neighborhood day in and day out, they have a special stake in development. But who is "the community"? Often a community has many voices and many perspectives. Some community members seek better retail, housing and employment options. Other residents are concerned that new development will change their community character, be out of scale with the rest of the neighborhood, and bring more traffic. A suc-

cessful planning process provides enough room and opportunity for all voices to be heard and considered. However, it is the responsibility of the community to participate constructively and collaboratively with the other stakeholders in the process, to understand the constraints and goals of other partners, and to work to a mutually beneficial and workable plan.

PUBLIC SECTOR

Municipal officials have a stake in the financial health of the District, a role in the growth of the region, and a responsibility to pursue equitable development (both positive and negative) that serves the city as a whole. Public agencies set the framework and objectives for growth and development in the District and often serve as collaborators and mediators to balance community, public and private interests for the long term health and vitality of the city as a whole.

PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTORS AND DEVELOPERS

Developers have a clear financial stake in the feasibility and success of neighborhood projects. The private sector brings not only investment capital, but also innovation, creativity, and connections to the partnership. Investors, like residents, seek projects that have broad public appeal and support. Traditional financing, however, often constrains development to "industry standards" that have proven marketable. Open cooperation and collaboration among public agencies, developers, and community members can address these obstacles and identify viable compromises that work for everyone.



Public, private, non-profit, and community partners all work together to create spaces for healthy neighborhood activities, like this Farmer's Market at an Adams Morgan bus transfer point.

The private sector is an important partner in creating attractive buildings and retail opportunities that define and give life to the neighborhood street.



ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES: *THE WASHINGTON DC EXPERIENCE*



For TOD to be appropriate in the District of Columbia, it must respond to the unique conditions of the neighborhoods of this city. On June 8th, 2002 a community training workshop was held to review the general principles of transit-oriented development and discuss their application in District neighborhoods. The purpose of the workshop was to encourage broader understanding of TOD, the challenges and opportunities it presents, and the positive impact it can have on our neighborhoods.

One hundred people attended this workshop representing every ward of the city. Many of the participants were Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners (ANCs) responsible for gathering and conveying neighborhood reactions to development proposals that come before the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) or Zoning Commission. The goal of the workshop was to help ANC Commissioners understand, craft, and share TOD principles with the residents of their neighborhoods.

Also in attendance were neighborhood association leaders, community activists, small business entrepreneurs, DC Main Street organizations, community development corporations, and interested individuals. Many people came to the workshop knowing very little about transit-oriented development or urban design. They came because they were interested in the topic and wanted to learn more about how to use transit assets to meet the goals of their neighborhoods for growth or stability.



Washington is unlike any other city. Each neighborhood must adapt TOD principles to the unique conditions of their community and the unique needs and objectives of their residents.



On June 8, 2002, residents from across the city participated in a community training workshop to explore how transit can help define the active center of District neighborhoods.



WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

For the past three decades, the Washington region has experienced tremendous population growth. Over the same period; however, the District of Columbia has lost nearly a third of the city's population, from a high of 802,000 in the 1950s to 572,000 currently. Today there is an upward trend in population as the District is once again beginning to capture a portion of the region's growth. While all neighborhoods can expect change, development pressures are uneven. Neighborhood residents have reacted to these pressures, often with concern. However, the issue is not if District neighborhoods will change, but how growth and change will occur and what strategies are in place to guide it in a way that is feasible for developers and desirable for neighborhoods.

CAPTURING OPPORTUNITIES

The positive effects of regional and city-wide growth include a growing and diversified employment base, economic development and increased tax revenues to fund public services. The negative impacts include increased traffic and associated declines in air quality, unequal access to jobs and opportunities, and increasing housing costs. Creating appropriate designs for TOD means neighborhoods can capitalize on the positive opportunities and mitigate negative impacts.

Existing Metro infrastructure, including bus routes and subway stops, presents a great opportunity for neighborhoods to capture the positive aspects of regional growth while mitigating negative impacts. The opportunities are many:

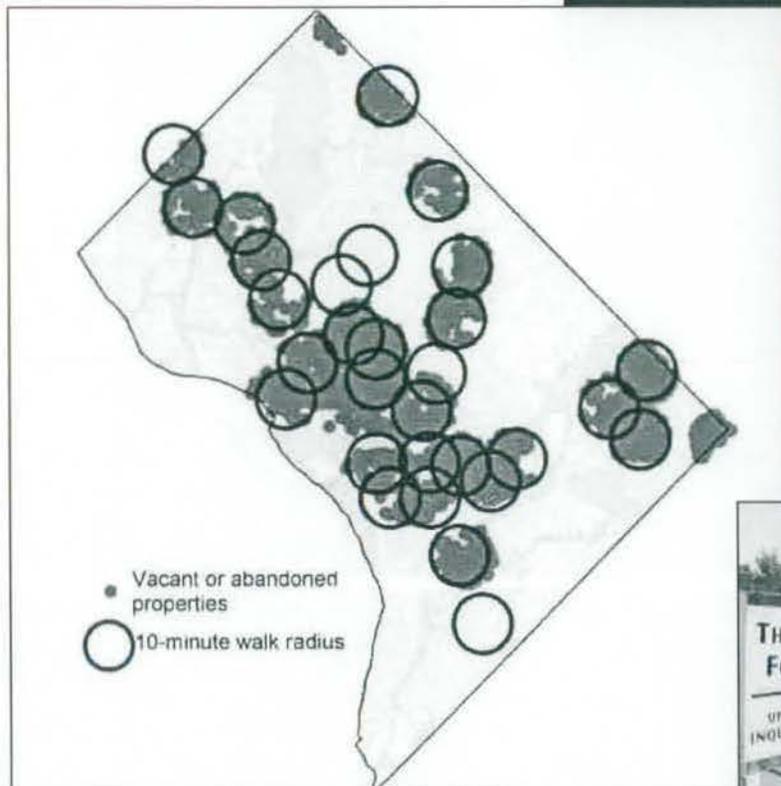
- Land is available for development without displacement or neighborhood disturbance. The District has over 2,000 acres of vacant or abandoned land within a 10-minute walk of high quality bus or rail service. WMATA controls over 1.7 million square feet of developable land.
- The region's roadways are filling up. Legendary traffic congestion in the suburbs is making District neighborhoods with high quality transit service more appealing for employers and new residents;
- Transit ridership is increasing. WMATA has reported a region-wide increase of over 100,000 daily trips since 1998;

- Air quality concerns are more acute. The region risks losing substantial federal funding for transportation infrastructure if air quality standards are not met. Better utilization and promotion of transit is essential.
- Neighborhoods want solutions to traffic congestion, housing and economic development. Over a third of neighborhood clusters identified traffic, affordable housing, and/or economic development as priority issues in their Strategic Neighborhood Action Plans (SNAPs).

DEVELOPER'S ADVICE FOR TOD

At the June 2002 workshop, ULI: The Urban Land Institute - a national development trade and research organization - shared with participants draft recommendations from a ULI study group convened to identify guiding principles for implementing TOD from the private sector perspective. These recommendations included:

1. Identify a Vision
2. Create Partnerships
3. Use Innovative Tools
4. Creatively Address Parking
5. Create hubs of mobility
6. Think 360 degrees
7. Transit area must work for pedestrians
8. Be Realistic about Retail
9. Think of the corridor and not just the station
10. Make Buses a Better Idea
11. Every Price Point Likes to Live Around Transit (diversity)
12. Development Around Transit Responds to a Changing and Growing Market
13. Factor Economic Feasibility into Planning
14. Invest for the Future
15. Commuting, Work and Corporate Culture is Changing



Vacant land around metro stations provides an immediate opportunity to redefine and recreate our neighborhood centers.

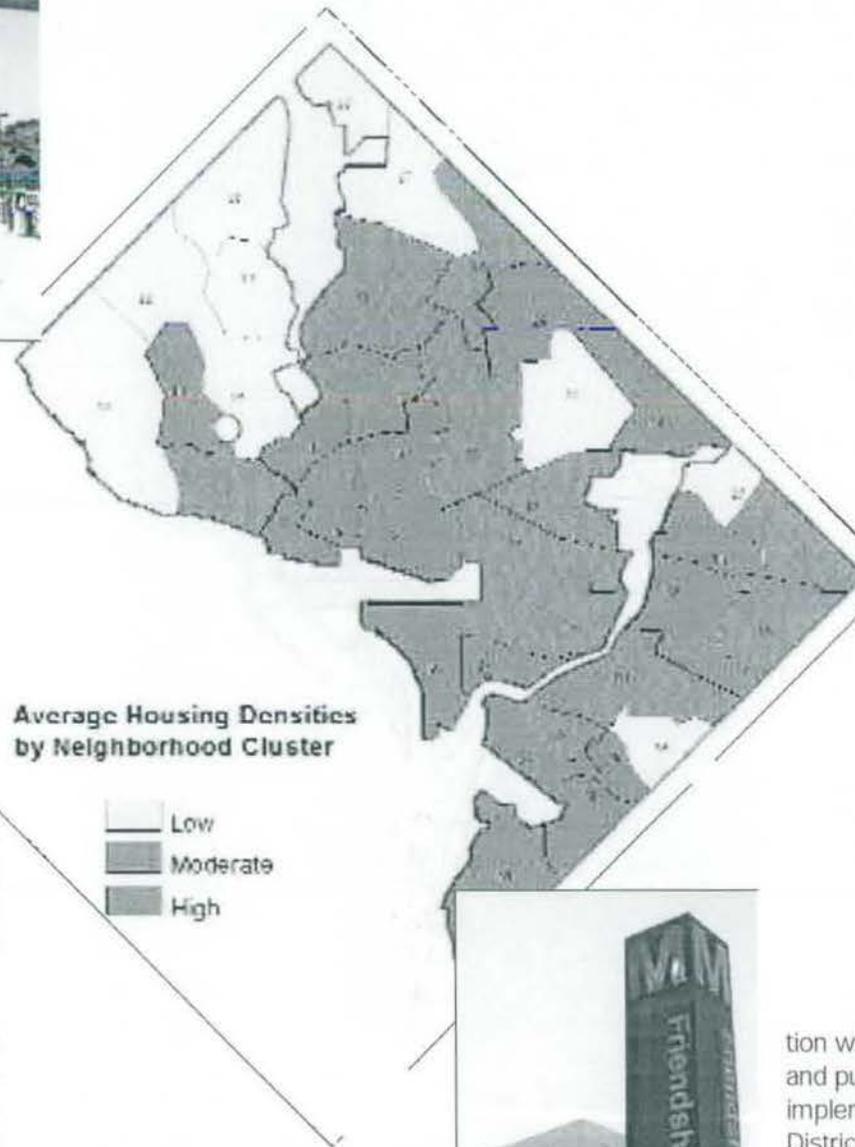


ULI's report on TOD Principles will be available in October 2002 and can be obtained through the web at <http://www.uli.org>

TAILORING PRINCIPLES FOR DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOODS

The TOD principles presented in this guidebook are typical for many cities and communities trying to plan for development that maximizes the use of transit. However, the District is unique in a number of ways: it is a wholly urban jurisdiction with well established neighborhoods; the transit system has been in place for over a generation; and there are limited opportunities for planning and redevelopment for whole new neighborhoods around transit areas as exist in the suburbs. Each neighborhood has its own unique strengths and challenges. What might be appropriate in Foggy Bottom may not be feasible or desirable in Deanwood. A transit-corridor may have consistently higher densities all along its length but not penetrate very deeply into the neighborhood; whereas a transit-area may be concentrated around a single node.

Therefore, these Principles are general guidelines that should be adopted and modified as appropriate to respond to unique neighborhood conditions. Generally speaking, however, is that areas around high-quality transit service are characterized by a relatively higher level activity of a greater variety than areas farther removed and less convenient to transit and the neighborhood center.



Washington neighborhoods vary in their land uses, densities, and development potential. Transit-oriented neighborhood centers should provide increased activity relative to the character of the surrounding neighborhood.



G NEIGHBORHOOD

are quite different from current land uses, densities, and market conditions. These are extremely attractive and distinct from other neighborhoods. They react any development at all. The District's neighborhoods are characterized predominantly by single family homes and rowhouses; others are a mix of traditional rowhouses and smaller apartment buildings; while others still are dominated by larger apartment buildings. These land uses define the identity of the neighborhood and its residents.

TOD design principles recognize these unique characteristics while providing opportunities for growth and strengthening the existing neighborhood. Continued citizen education, understanding and participation will help developers, investors, and public officials to appropriately implement TOD for each unique District neighborhood.



DESIGNING A TRANSIT-ORIENTED NEIGHBORHOOD: *THE IMPORTANCE OF A DEFINED CENTER*

A defined neighborhood center serves as the focus of community life. Six key design principles refocus new investment to recreate traditional centers to take advantage of existing transit facilities to create pedestrian friendly retail, entertainment, employment educational, and housing options for all community members.

CONCEPTS

A successful transit-oriented neighborhood center....

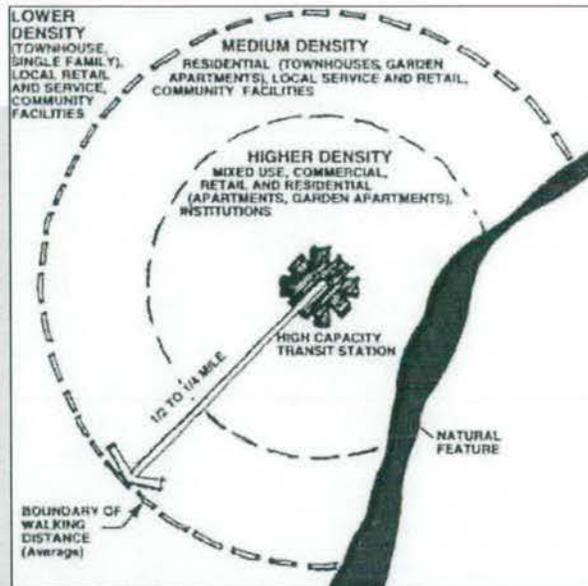
- Is a core of compact development focused around bus and rail stations.
 - Is the center of community life by providing opportunities to shop, work, live, learn and play.
 - Has a defined boundary and character distinct from the surrounding neighborhood.
- Emphasizes six key design principles:
 1. Orientation & Connectivity
 2. Quality Public Realm & Amenities
 3. Pedestrian Friendly, Safe Environment
 4. Attractive Architecture & Design
 5. Mix of Uses
 6. Creative Parking Management



A defined neighborhood center integrates basic design principles into one lively pedestrian environment accessible by transit.

GUIDELINES

This chapter focuses on six design principles that can create vibrant centers focused on transit, while enhancing unique neighborhood characteristics. Most of these principles are evident in different combinations throughout Washington, DC; however, they can be combined to have a greater impact in reinforcing patterns of development friendly to transit and walking to increase neighborhood vitality.



A transit-oriented neighborhood has a defined center focused around high quality transit. Activity and density decreases with distance from the center.
Source: New Jersey Transit

A. Integrate the six design principles to create compact development around rail and bus facilities:

1. CONNECTIVITY

A transit-oriented neighborhood center must be connected to neighborhood destinations, different travel modes, and activity centers throughout the District and region.

2. QUALITY PUBLIC REALM

A network of public spaces must be provided to create a sense of place and promote pedestrian activity.

3. PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

Physical design, infrastructure, and land uses promote walking, biking and transit use to increase activity and deter crime.

4. ATTRACTIVE ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

Quality design should integrate all components of a transit-oriented neighborhood to reflect one unified, attractive environment.

5. MIX OF USES

A variety and intensity of land use and activities should be provided within walking distance of transit facilities.

6. CREATIVE PARKING MANAGEMENT

Parking should be managed so that automobile access is balanced with transit, pedestrian and bicycle travel.

B. Create an environment that supports transit use and neighborhood investment.

- Promote compact development around transit facilities to shift neighborhood focus from automobile travel by making many daily activities accessible by transit and walking.
- Create a street wall of buildings to provide retail, employment and housing opportunities that open onto the sidewalk, defining a vibrant walking environment with access to transit.
- Stimulate reinvestment in neighborhoods by creating a variety of development opportunities. Access to many destinations and transit results in a compact vibrant environment.



Undesirable

CONNECTIVITY



Providing compact development at transit facilities shifts focus from automobile travel requiring extensive parking (above), to emphasize walking and transit as the dominant modes of travel to and from the neighborhood center (below).

Desirable



MIX OF USES



Automobile uses such as wide road or large, barren parking lots create a hostile and unsafe pedestrian and neighborhood environment (above). Continuous development along the street with an active mix of uses creates a welcoming place for pedestrians to shop and dine (below).



ATTRACTIVE ARCHITECTURE



Deteriorating properties can be a burden on neighborhoods, but also an opportunity for reinvestment (above). Infill development can strengthen a community and create new opportunities for housing, retail, and employment (below).



C. The neighborhood center should be focused at the transit stop, intensifying uses within a comfortable walk of transit and tapering away in intensity away from transit access.

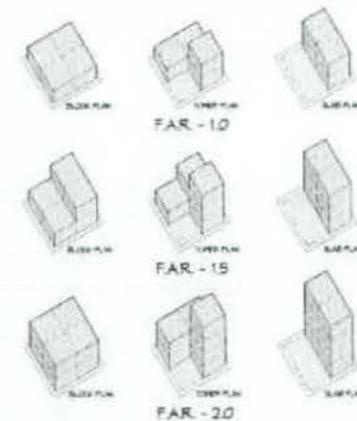
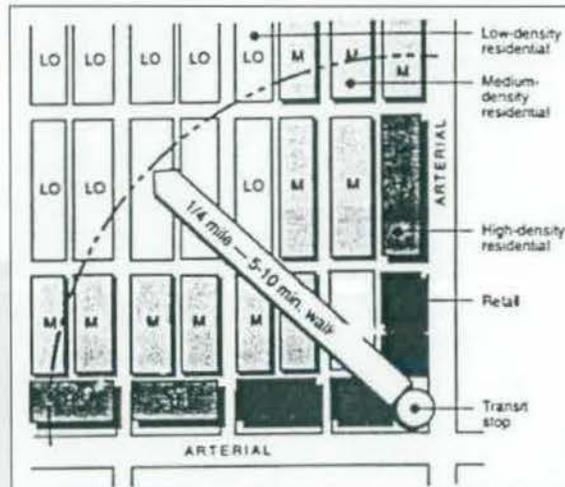
- A general guideline for a comfortable walking distance is a 5-minute walk (roughly 1/4 mile or 1,250 feet) to transit stations or stops.
- The boundary of the transit-oriented area is within a 10-minute walk of high quality transit—typically 1/2 mile or 2,500 foot from the stop.
- Increase intensity of uses and activities in the neighborhood center to create a variety of opportunities within walking distance of transit stations and support local neighborhood retail.
- Decrease development intensity at perimeter of the defined center to relate to the surrounding neighborhood.
- The boundaries will vary and adapt to the neighborhood. Generally speaking, people will walk further to employment and housing than they will to retail services.

Intensity of uses decline with distance from the defined neighborhood center and comfortable, convenient use of transit .
Source: Chicago Transit Authority

WHAT IS FAR?

FAR refers to Floor Area Ratio, the ratio of the total building floor area to parcel area. FAR is used to measure the density of commercial mixed used development and certain intense housing types (apartments and town houses). FAR requirements ensure the appropriate intensity of development occurs within the neighborhood center and may vary depending on neighborhood characteristics and transit facilities.

FAR usually sets a maximum level of development. To assure the goals of compact, transit-oriented development, minimum FAR requirements may be more appropriate.



Different building shapes may produce the same FAR
Source: Cunningham + Quill Architects

PRINCIPLE ONE: ORIENTATION & CONNECTIVITY

THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATING CONNECTIONS

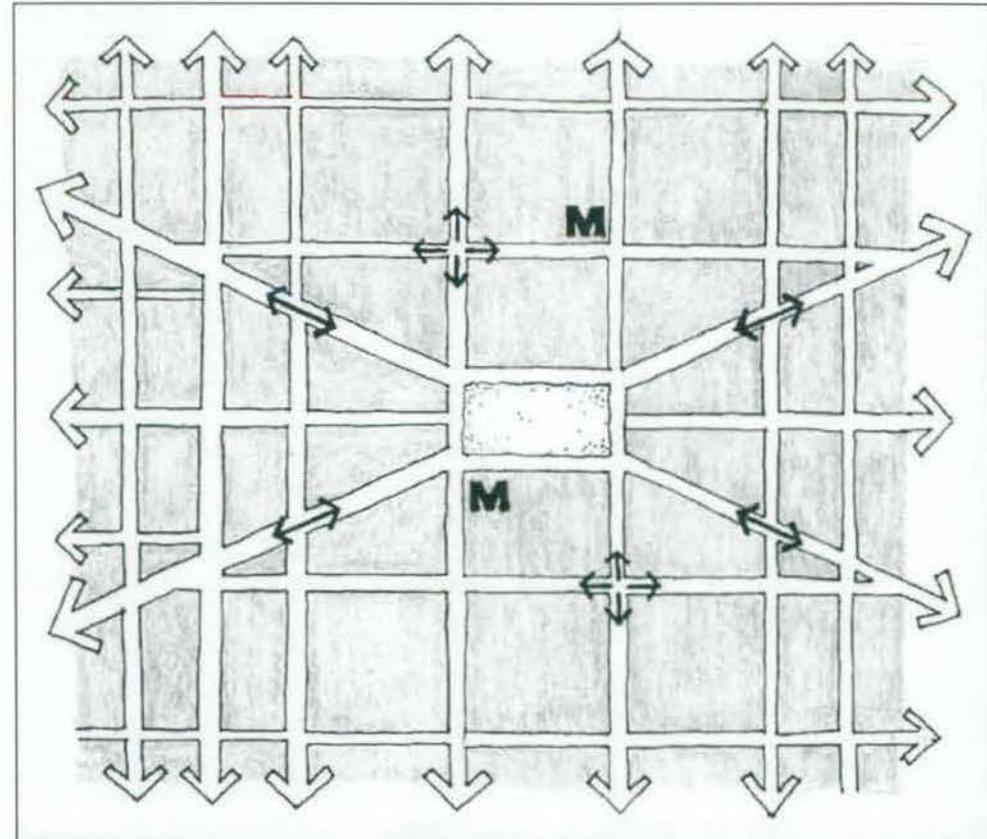


To really be a vibrant node of activity, a neighborhood center must be connected to other destinations in the neighborhood and other opportunities throughout the District and the region. It must be easy to access, accessible through multiple routes and pathways, and serviced by a variety of transportation modes.

CONCEPTS

Orientation toward the neighborhood center and connections to and from it...

- Provides multiple routes to transit and other destinations.
- Creates easy and convenient connections with other modes of travel.
- Enhances sightlines to transit and other destinations to make connections easily visual and logical.
- Minimizes physical barriers to walking and transit use.
- Links neighborhood centers together to maximize access to goods, services and opportunities throughout the region



Washington's traditional street grid is a model of connectivity. All streets converge on a common center and provide easy and logical access across the neighborhood.

GUIDELINES

Not all neighborhood destinations or amenities can or should be concentrated in the neighborhood center. Schools, large parks, large-scale retail, or low-density residential developments may be more appropriately located outside of the neighborhood center. Access to and linkages between local and regional destinations is important to the vitality of the core transit center.

A. Provide multiple routes to transit and destinations in the defined center.

Neighborhood centers are most successful when they can be accessed easily and logically from many different points in the surrounding neighborhood.

- Strengthen or reintroduce an interconnected network of streets and pathways.
- Break up "super blocks" with streets or pathways. Blocks of extensive length limit pedestrian movement and convenient access to transit.
- Strengthen or reintroduce a simple street and block pattern radiating from the neighborhood center; avoid cul de sacs, curving roads, or dead ends. Street patterns should be simple and memorable.
- Use the intersection of major streets or pathways as opportunities interesting architecture, uses, or destinations.
- Provide clear, concise, and reliable maps of the neighborhood at transit stops and in other locations in the neighborhood.
- Improve signage to neighborhood destinations such as schools, parks, recreation centers, and historic resources.
- Increase lighting and other safety measures to ensure that a number of different routes provide safe pedestrian pathways to transit and neighborhood destinations.

L'Enfant's historic plan for Washington DC (left) laid out the city in a grid of streets with diagonal connections to other important destinations in the District.



Neighborhoods can take advantage of transit by highlighting easy routes to important local destinations such as historic sites to attract visitors to the community.



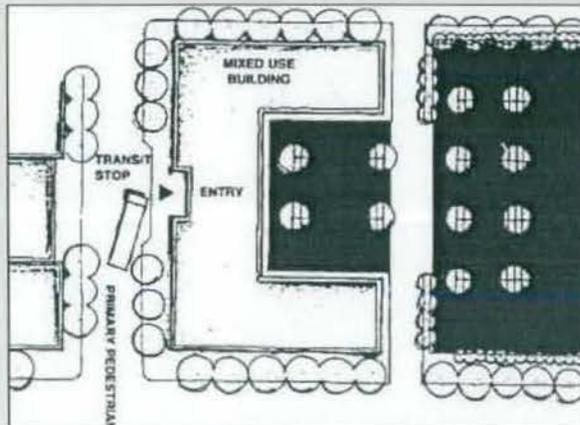
B. Provide clear connections from transit to other modes of travel including walking, biking, and transit transfers.

- Design transit-area plazas and public spaces to integrate bus access and transfer points.
- Incorporate bus shelters into public spaces and the architecture of buildings along transit routes.
- Provide safe bicycle facilities close to transit areas, such as lockers and paths.
- Adjust the connection between bus and rail services so that buses do not idle for extended periods or obstruct pedestrian pathways.



Transit centers provide direct access to bus service, major pedestrian routes and neighborhood destinations making transit convenient and easy to use.

Buildings can be designed to incorporate bus stops or other transit amenities into the façade of the building itself to enhance connections to transit.

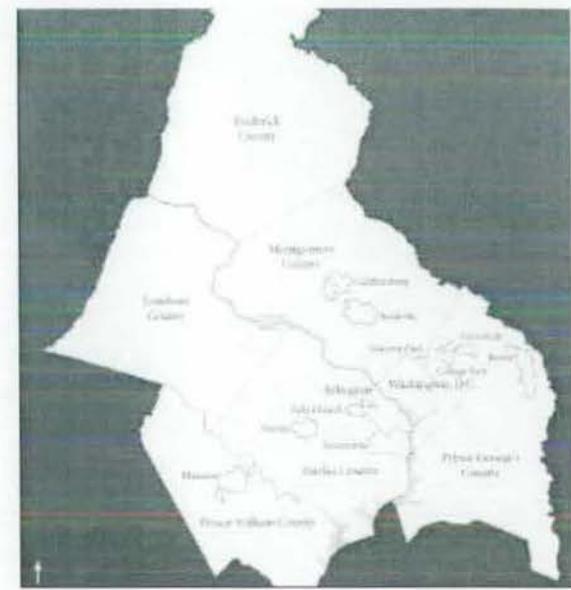


Neighborhood centers should be designed to facilitate connections between different modes of travel including transit, bike, and auto.

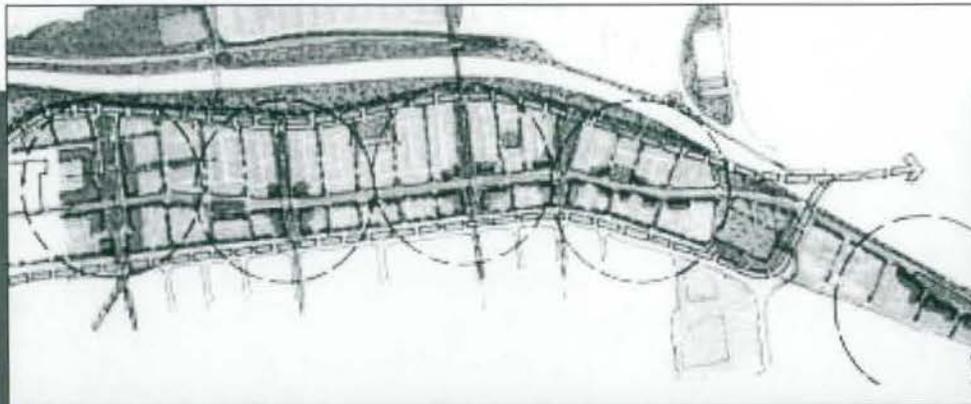


C. Enhance visual connections across the neighborhood center. Visual connections provide a sense of orientation, entice people to visit the destination, and promote a sense of comfort and safety.

- Orient public spaces and building entrances to transit facilities to increase access to transit and destinations such as shopping and employment.
- Include public art or other landmarks in transit-area developments to help visitors and residents orient themselves in the neighborhood.
- Maintain straight streets and consistent building setbacks to extend the line of sight for several blocks in many directions.
- Provide direct pedestrian pathways that follow site-lines to destinations.



The transit system provides all residents access to opportunities throughout the metropolitan region.



The proposed Potomac Yards plan in Virginia is an example of a transit corridor with multiple, connected nodes. Source: Cunningham + Quill Architects

REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

Vibrant neighborhood centers that are pedestrian-friendly and connected to transit provide local access to housing, employment and service options. Several unique centers within the District and metropolitan region reduce reliance on automobile travel while creating a system of regional destinations or "nodes of activity."

The regional benefits of TOD are best recognized through this system of activity nodes. Connected by transit, they provide regional access to services and employment to all citizens, regardless of automobile ownership. In addition, reduced reliance on automobile travel results in improved air quality and less unplanned, dispersed development that relies on auto travel. In this way, TOD holds the potential for local and regional change that can benefit all District neighborhoods and the region.

D. Minimize physical barriers to transit use.

- Provide safe, convenient and inviting pedestrian and bicycle bridges and tunnels over/under barriers such as major roadways, railroad tracks, and steep gullies or streets.
- Link development projects to area transportation and circulation plans to ensure consistency.

E. Provide convenient, reliable and flexible connections between transit-oriented neighborhood centers.

- Expand transit service to maximize accessibility to neighborhood centers.
- Route transit service to link neighborhood centers with minimal transfers or delay.
- Promote service to the neighborhood center by multiple travel modes including subway lines, direct bus service, and bicycle pathways.



At Rhode Island Avenue, pedestrians cut across railroad tracks adjacent to the Metro Station to take the most direct route home. Improving access is important to encouraging transit use and providing safe routes.



Neighborhood centers should be safe and accessible for all members of the community.
Source: Washington Regional Network



Public spaces help create an identity for the neighborhood as well as providing comfortable places to sit, visit, and relax.