Transit-Friendly Communities Guide

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Authority

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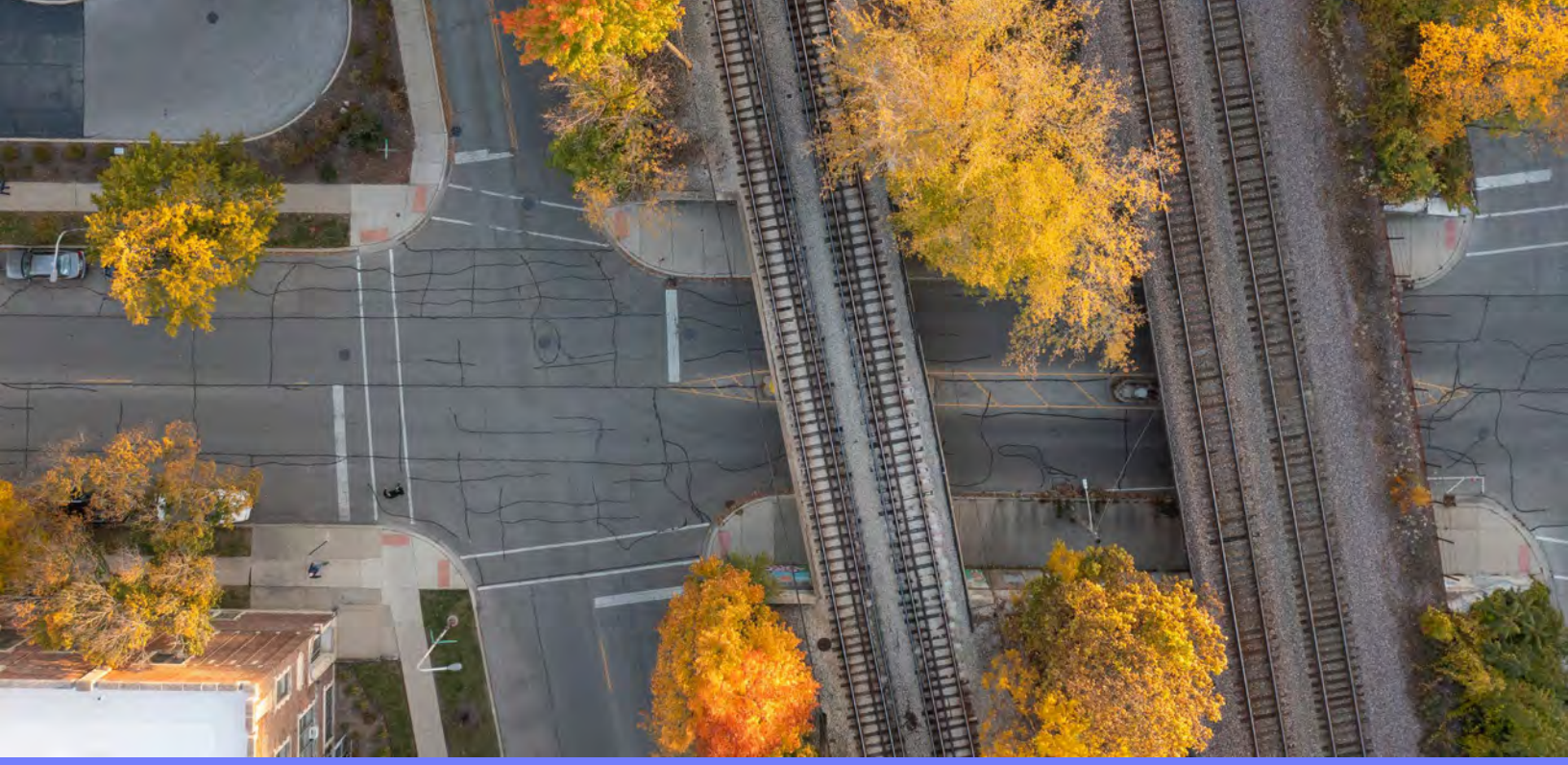

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Transit-Friendly Communities Guide

ABOUT THE GUIDEBOOK

The RTA initiated the development of this guide to support and encourage decision-makers about practical ways to make their communities more transit-friendly and ensure that all riders can travel safely and efficiently. An implementation action from the RTA's Strategic Plan, this Guide also updates the 2012 Setting the Stage for Transit Guidebook, incorporating new concepts such as changing commuter trends, micromobility, affordable housing, and equitable TOD (ETOD).

The process of developing this document was guided by a Steering Committee which included representatives from municipal and county government, CTA, Metra, Pace, nonprofit and advocacy organizations, and developers. The Committee provided feedback at every key phase of the project, reviewing draft documents and sharing their expertise and a range of perspectives.

Additional input came from focus groups that were conducted with individuals from transportation agencies, developers, municipal planners, and nonprofit and community-based organizations.

ETOD

Equitable Transit-Oriented Development

ETOD is generally described as an intentional approach to TOD that ensures people of all incomes have equitable opportunity to experience the benefits of mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development near train stations and bus stops. In addition, ETOD can help restore the fabric of many communities by being intentional about designing or retrofitting development to respond to how residents want to live, work and play.

The four core elements of ETOD include:

Density: Compact development supports transit and connects people to jobs, goods, services, and a range of civic, educational, and recreational opportunities.

Transit: Transit plays an integral role in advancing equitable development by providing convenient, reliable travel options that expand access to a diversity of opportunities and support a more sustainable environment.

Accessibility: Neighborhoods, commercial districts, and other activity centers are more vibrant and active spaces when they are safe and accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists, and people of all abilities.

Mixed Use: A mix of land uses within a building, block, or neighborhood reduces car dependency and creates dynamic spaces.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The Transit-Friendly Communities Guide provides a range of tools to make transit more accessible to more people throughout the region and support residential and commercial development near transit. Across various topic areas, the Guidebook includes strategies and techniques that local decision-makers, the development community, and residents throughout the region can use to advocate for best practices related to infrastructure and development near transit. The document contains policies for development near all types of transit—including rail, bus, and microtransit—and communities can tailor best practices to meet their local conditions.

CHAPTER 1
Introduction

Why transit-friendly design matters

CHAPTER 2
Transit-Friendly Design Concepts

Illustrative design concepts that depict how to incorporate best practices in different types of community contexts

[SEE NEXT PAGE FOR SAMPLES OF THE THREE DESIGN CONCEPTS]

CHAPTER 3
Transit Services & Transportation Trends

An overview of transit options in the region and how the agencies are responding to riders' needs in a changed environment

CHAPTER 4
Land Use & Market Trends

How demographic and market changes are impacting communities and how ETOD can provide solutions by connecting land use and transportation polices

CHAPTER 5
Equity & Engagement

How to engage your community in ETOD and transit-friendly design and ensure everyone has a seat at the table

CHAPTER 6
Transportation & Land Use Policies

A toolkit of land use and transportation strategies and best practices

CHAPTER 7
Access Infrastructure

The nuts and bolts of transit-friendly design elements for making transit more accessible in communities

CHAPTER 8
Case Studies

Ten case studies from the Chicago area and across the nation that illustrate best practices through transit-friendly developments and policies

CHAPTER 9
Implementation

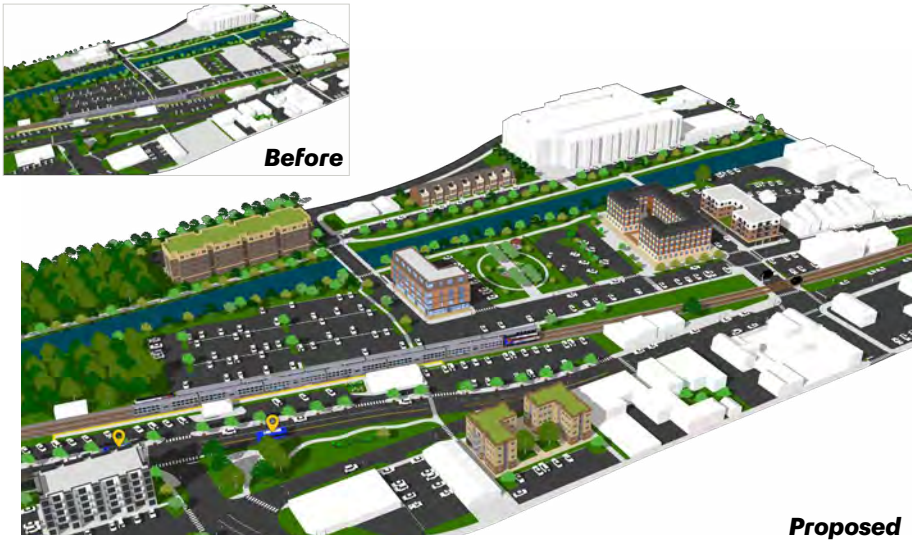
A checklist of policies, programs, and techniques to implement transit-friendly design and ETOD in your community

TRANSIT-FRIENDLY DESIGN CONCEPTS (CHAPTER 2)

PROTOTYPE DESIGN 1

Commercial Bus Corridor

This concept depicts a bus corridor that has big-box retail stores, large parking lots, and other auto-oriented commercial uses. Transit-friendly enhancements include: residential and commercial development that reclaims underutilized parking lots, pedestrian connections from bus stops and sidewalks to building entrances, a public gathering space, and narrower roadways and enhanced crosswalks to make pedestrian crossings safer.



PROTOTYPE DESIGN 2

Suburban Downtown

This concept depicts a suburban downtown with a train station, bus service, and an historic Main Street with a mix of retail, restaurants, office, and residential uses. Transit-friendly enhancements include new mixed-use and residential development on underutilized parking and vacant lots, multi-family housing redevelopment near the train station, enhanced pedestrian connections to/from transit, and a new public gathering space.

PROTOTYPE DESIGN 3

Urban Train Station & Bus Route

This concept depicts an urban neighborhood with a rail station, bus route, and variety of uses and densities ranging from single-family residential to mid-rise multi-family. Transit-friendly enhancements include new infill residential and commercial development on vacant lots, a bikeshare station, and enhanced crosswalks to make pedestrian crossings safer. The concept is based on the award-winning 43 Green development in the Bronzeville neighborhood of Chicago.

LAND USE DENSITIES & TRANSIT SERVICE (CHAPTER 4)

The table below summarizes the optimum land use densities and characteristics that support varying levels of transit services provided by Pace, CTA, and Metra. Given how much of the region is zoned for single-family detached housing, current densities are often not high enough to support high-frequency transit. Transit-friendly designs can increase the number of housing units and commercial space while still providing the benefits of open space, walkable and bikeable areas, and access to convenient amenities.

Transit Service	Characteristics	Optimum Density Needed		Examples
Pace On Demand & Pace Dial-A-Ride	• Reservation-based, ADA accessible shared-ride service in 11 designated service areas	**Single-family neighborhood** **4-6 du per acre** -and/or- **Employment density varies**		Arlington Heights-Rolling Meadows, Naperville-Aurora, Wheaton-Winfield
Pace Fixed Bus Route	• Operates on set schedules, primarily in the suburbs • Frequencies tailored to demand • Frequent stops	**Attached and detached single-family and commercial** **8-12 du per acre** -and/or- **30 employees per acre**		Golf Road, Busse Highway, Lincoln Avenue, Green Bay Road, Wolf Road, Mannheim-La Grange Roads
Metra Rail	• Regional rail service connecting suburban communities among each other and to the City of Chicago • High capacity and speed • Wide station spacing	**Suburban downtown** **10+ du per acre** -and/or- **Employment density varies**		143rd Street Metra Station, Orland Park, Tinley Park, Arlington Heights, Ravenswood, Winnetka
CTA Fixed Bus Route	• Frequent service • High capacity buses • Frequent stops • Operates primarily in the City of Chicago	**Mixed residential and commercial** **12-18 du per acre** -and/or- **75 employees per acre**		Lawrence Avenue, 79th Street, Western Avenue, Stony Island
Pace Pulse	• Premium limited-stop bus service with enhanced amenities and a streamlined route design • Serves heavily traveled corridors of Chicagoland	**Multi-family residential and commercial** **12-14 du per acre** -and/or- **75 employees per acre**		Dempster Line, Milwaukee Line In development: South Halsted, 95th Street, Cermak
Bus Rapid Transit	• Pre-paid fares • Dedicated bus lanes • Fewer stops • Extra loading areas • Transit signal priority • Queue jumps • High-quality stations • Vehicle enhancements	**Multi-family residential and commercial** **14+ du per acre** -and/or- **75 employees per acre**		Indianapolis IndyGo BRT
CTA Rail	• Frequent service all day • High capacity and speed • Dedicated right-of-way • High fixed and operating costs	**Urban neighborhood** **14+ du per acre** -and/or- **75 employees per acre**		Belmont, Harlem/ Lake, Midway, Main Street - Evanston, 95th/ Dan Ryan, Dempster-Skokie

1. Introduction

WHY DEVELOP A TRANSIT-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES GUIDE?

Transit-Friendly Design is Part of the Solution

The Regional Transportation Authority's (RTA) *Transit is the Answer*, the 2023 regional transit strategic plan, identified the importance of investing in transit to achieve more livable communities and equitable access to where we work, reside and shop. The RTA brought together hundreds of individuals, organizations, businesses, elected and appointed leaders to formulate an approach to unprecedented changes, including a shift in housing patterns, how we get to work, whether we commute to an office, whether we shop in person or online, and where we go for entertainment and recreation.

A central focus of increasing transit usage and reducing auto dependence is the need for transit-friendly design, which includes a number of measures to improve the built environment to make transit more accessible. This includes design and policy steps for development near all types of transit, including rail, bus and microtransit.

Studies have shown that more walkable, transit-friendly development increases health outcomes, reduces household expenses, and increases access to jobs, goods, and services. Transit-friendly design is also more sustainable – economically, socially and equitably. According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, "new or expanded public transportation options can improve health and health equity by reducing traffic crashes and air pollution, increasing physical activity, and improving access to medical care, healthy food, vital services, employment and social connection."[1]

Benefits of transit-friendly communities—for both municipalities and residents—include:

- Expanded housing options
- Greater access to jobs, services, and businesses
- Stronger tax base due to increased density of uses and greater walkability/foot traffic
- Less car-dependence, reducing carbon emissions and traffic and improving public health
- Reclaiming underutilized land (e.g. parking lots) for tax-generating housing, businesses, and amenities

Furthermore, a National Association of Realtors 2023 survey found that in deciding where to live: [2]

- 79% said being within an easy walk of other places and things, such as shops and parks, is very/somewhat important.
- 85% said sidewalks and places to walk are very/somewhat important.
- 65% said having public transport nearby is very/somewhat important.

This design concept (See Chapter 2) features pedestrian connections to housing and businesses and a public plaza centered around the bus stop and walkable amenities.

Design Makes a Difference

One of the major recommendations of *Transit is the Answer* is to improve access to transit for all through working with local communities. Advocacy Item #4 states:

> ***"Support communities' efforts to improve the area around their transit stations/stops and pursue equitable transit-oriented development (ETOD)."***

Why is this important? For residents, workers, and visitors to use transit, access is key. If there are large parking lots that one has to cross to reach a destination, a lack of sidewalks, poor lighting, and a lack of street connectivity, it can be difficult to use transit (especially for those who are mobility-impaired, such as seniors and people using wheelchairs). Facing these barriers, people are more likely to choose driving over transit.

Similarly, development that is located in close proximity and accessible to transit increases ridership and allows transit agencies to provide efficient and high-quality services. Since these decisions are made by local communities, a close partnership is needed between municipalities, transit agencies, developers and the broader community to create attractive, sustainable and feasible solutions that meet needs of residents, businesses and visitors alike.

Importance of Local Land Use Decisions

For transit to work well for riders, partnerships are needed with local communities to enhance the built environment in which transit operates. Municipalities govern zoning and land use decisions at the local level, including decisions on types of uses, and the design, density, height and site layout. All of these factors heavily influence the built environment, transit operations, and the experience of potential riders.

Many communities in the region historically developed around transit lines – initially along streetcars and trains. The legacy of these development patterns lays a foundation for what we now call transit-oriented development (TOD).

Over time, communities began to develop in more auto-centric designs, built for commuters to travel by roads and highways to get to work and other destinations. Development spread out to much larger areas of the region through subdivisions, malls, and commercial arterials, without consideration of access to transit for workers or those who do not have access to a vehicle. In many areas, a car is still needed to get around. Sidewalks are missing, trails have gaps, and development patterns make it difficult to operate and access transit.

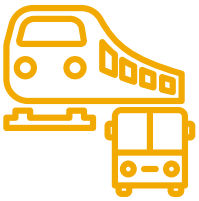
Equitable TOD principles, defined further on the following page, can help restore the fabric of many communities by being intentional about designing or retrofitting development to respond to how residents want to live, work and play.

Locating new, mixed-use developments next to a train station or bus route increases accessibility to transit service and makes service more cost effective (i.e. more frequent service is possible at a lower cost per passenger). Adding sidewalks and trails to existing residential communities can connect homes to destinations and transit. A more walkable environment is safer, healthier, and can support locally-driven economic development through increased foot traffic. Such land use decisions can make transit a more attractive choice than driving, encouraging more transit ridership.

What is ETOD?

Equitable transit-oriented development (ETOD) is generally described as an intentional approach to TOD that ensures people of all incomes have equitable opportunity to experience the benefits of mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development near train stations and bus stops. The four core elements of ETOD include:

Density: Compact development supports transit and connects people to jobs, goods, services, and a range of civic, educational, and recreational opportunities.



Transit: Transit plays an integral role in advancing equitable development by providing convenient, reliable travel options that expand access to a diversity of opportunities and support a more sustainable environment.

Accessibility: Neighborhoods, commercial districts, and other activity centers are more vibrant and active spaces when they are safe and accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists, and people of all abilities.

Mixed Use: A mix of land uses within a building, block, or neighborhood reduces car dependency and creates dynamic spaces.

To expand access to transit, ETOD principles include:

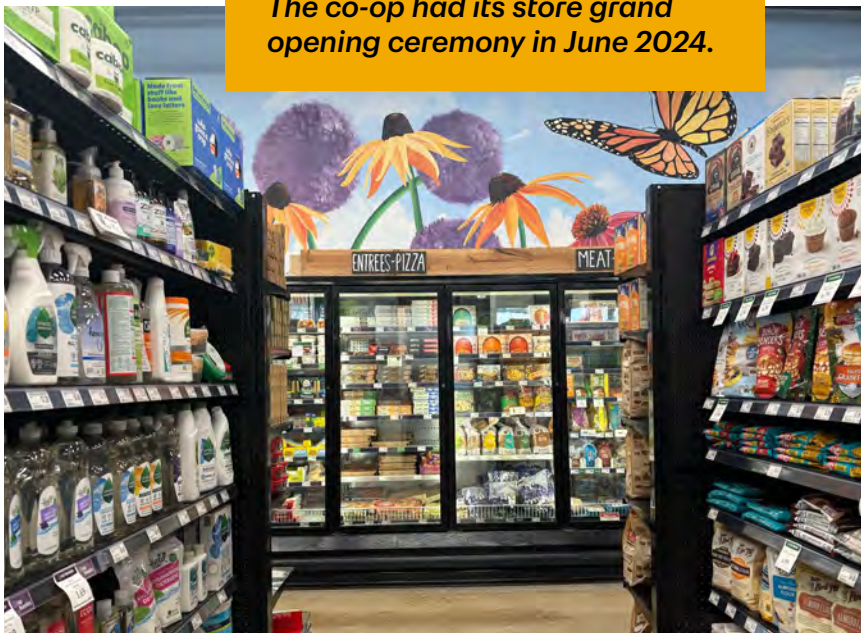
- **Community engagement** that amplifies all resident voices in the decision-making process, intentionally working to hear the thoughts and ideas of those historically left out of the planning process.
- Developing a **community-based vision** and set of recommendations that enables all people to experience the benefits of living and working in more dense, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented areas that are centered on transit.
- Elevate and prioritize investments and policies that **close socioeconomic gaps** between neighborhoods, improving **access to housing, jobs and wealth-building** without the threat of displacement.

The RTA recognizes the historic harms that have left communities of color, those experiencing lower incomes, residents with disabilities and older adults — all groups who rely most on transit — without the transportation network they deserve. Past development and transportation patterns have impacted communities disproportionately, including Black, Brown and Indigenous people.

Who does ETOD benefit? Equity goes beyond just income and economic class, and ETOD also benefits people of varying physical abilities, ages, and cultures. In addition, the intent of ETOD is rooted in a sustainable mindset to address environmental justice and the impacts of climate change, such as flooding, air quality, pollution, and rising temperatures.

Why does ETOD matter? Planning for TOD areas without centering equity brings harm to people with lower and moderate incomes who increasingly get priced out of the opportunity to experience the positive impacts of living and working in a dense, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented area near transit. In strong and emerging markets, ETOD has the capacity to provide affordable housing and commercial spaces near transit. In areas that have experienced historic disinvestment, ETOD can attract reinvestment and provide much needed amenities that help to close socioeconomic gaps. Across all markets, ETOD elevates diverse voices in a collective manner to generate community-based decision-making.

Wild Onion Market is a cooperative grocery store in Rogers Park, located on the Clark Street bus route, steps from a Metra station and Divvy bikeshare station, and a half-mile from the CTA Red Line station. The City of Chicago granted the co-op $250,000 under the Equitable Transit Oriented Development Grant Program to help cover development and construction costs in May 2023. The co-op had its store grand opening ceremony in June 2024.



What are the benefits of ETOD?

According to the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC), ETOD benefits include:[3]

Household transportation cost savings of up to ***$10,000*** per year

Retail sales up to ***88%*** higher in transit and pedestrian-friendly areas

Household transportation emissions up to ***78%*** lower in communities near transit

Access to ***24-50%*** more jobs, particularly for low-income residents

Health improvements, including ***3x*** lower obesity rates among adults who walk, bike or take transit

Additional benefits include:

- The ability to access more daily needs without traveling by car, reducing car trips
- Improved health outcomes
- Opportunities for more affordable housing near transit
- Reduced expenses of owning and maintaining a car
- Possibilities of expanding access to generational wealth

Market Trends

There has been a confluence between market trends and ETOD best practices. Transit has the potential to support three key market trends (see Chapter 4: Land Use & Market Trends for more):

1. **There is increasing demand for a wider choice of housing types.** Demographic and consumer tastes have increased the demand for multi-family housing, smaller lots, senior housing, duplexes, and townhomes. While single-family detached homes will remain an important part of the region's housing stock, consumer demand is looking for greater choices. They are also looking for housing that is walkable and bikeable to key amenities such as restaurants, outdoor spaces, shopping and entertainment. These trends dovetail into ETOD design principles.

2. **Commercial corridors, malls, downtowns and neighborhood business districts are transforming into mixed-use, walkable centers.** Many shopping malls are being reinvented to encompass a wider set of uses, including housing and amenities. Commercial strips with single-purpose "big box" stores have excess parking that can be redeveloped into new uses such as housing. Downtowns and business districts are also being transformed to recapture vacant or underutilized commercial space and turn it into new uses.

3. **Commute changes and the rise of hybrid and remote work are transforming our communities,** increasing demand for off-peak transit service, and potentially increasing demand for development in design formats that also work well for transit – walkable clusters of development with mixed-uses, public spaces, and "right sized" parking.

Yet, as the housing market strengthens, housing is becoming less affordable for many households. Rents and mortgage costs continue to rise across the region, making housing less affordable and inventory scarce: **Over one in four homeowners and over 45% of renters pay more than 30% of their income for housing in each of the six counties in the RTA region.**[4]

Over one in four homeowners and over 45% of renters pay more than 30% of their income for housing in each of the six counties.

(Source: Esri Business Analyst 2024)

Transit Agencies Are Responding to the Challenges

The RTA six-county region (Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will) is served by three service agencies that are taking bold actions to provide the services required by changes in travel patterns.

Metra is beginning to modify its schedules and service levels to implement regional rail principles, transitioning from a commuter rail program focused on office workers going downtown five-days per week to a "regional rail" system with more frequent mid-day service and new fare policies to serve more flexible travel patterns based on the increase of remote and hybrid workers.

CTA is upgrading its infrastructure, expanding Red Line service to 130th Street to serve residents who had some of the longest commute times in the region, and restoring schedules to meet the demand.

Pace has built two Pace Pulse bus rapid transit lines to provide faster, express service along key corridors. Two more are being planned. Pace continues to update routes to respond to rider demand and service delivery.

But the ease of using transit—and the likelihood that more people begin to use transit as their preferred mode of transportation—ultimately depends on how people in our region can access transit and the development patterns that shape where people live, work and play.

About this Guidebook

In Spring 2024, the RTA initiated the development of this guide to support, encourage, and educate decision-makers and residents across the region about practical ways to make communities more transit-friendly and ensure that all transit riders can travel safely and efficiently.

An implementation action from the RTA's Strategic Plan, this Guide also updates the 2012 *Setting the Stage for Transit Guidebook*, incorporating new concepts such as changing commuter trends, micromobility, affordable housing, and ETOD.

Process

The process of developing this document was guided by a Steering Committee which included representatives from municipal and county government, CTA, Metra, Pace, nonprofit and advocacy organizations, and developers. The Committee provided feedback at every key phase of the project, reviewing draft documents and sharing their expertise and a range of perspectives.

Additional input came from focus groups that were conducted with individuals from transportation agencies, developers, municipal planners, and nonprofit and community-based organizations.

Each focus group asked participants to discuss the following questions:

- What are the top challenges or barriers to fostering transit-friendly communities?
- What are the most important elements needed to improve access infrastructure and design of development?
- What are key opportunities and trends that can help support transit-friendly communities?
- How can this guide be a useful tool for developers and elected and appointed officials?

A summary of feedback is provided on the following page.

Figure 1.1: Summary of Feedback from Focus Groups

	Challenges & Barriers	Opportunities & Trends
Transportation Representatives	• Gaps in sidewalk connectivity • Pedestrian, bike, ADA, and transit often not part of initial site planning • Competing for limited ROW space: bus stop, bike lane, sidewalks • Need Phase 1 Engineering to be competitive for grants • Need support for project financing (e.g. RTA Access to Transit Program) • Private owners resistant to reduce parking	• Complete streets design can also be placemaking • Growing focus on ADA accessibility • IDOT improvements can include sidewalks/lighting • Develop inter-jurisdictional maintenance agreements (e.g. East Branch DuPage River Trail, Metra/Pace bus shelter cost sharing) • Importance of high quality improvements (e.g. covered bike parking vs. basic bike racks) • Parking demand management and pricing • Access infrastructure can spur private development
Developers	• Zoning (existing restrictions and process) • Ability to get financing • Difficulty in leasing out retail spaces • Requirements for natural gas, EV charging spaces • Need for elected officials to lead process toward TOD outcomes	• Current municipal incentives are supportive for higher density development TOD has been gaining public support • Need public-private partnerships in areas without investment • Village leadership that shares the same development goals • Involve Village to make public infrastructure improvements (sidewalks, roads and curb cuts) • Housing market is undersupplied
Municipal Representatives	• Zoning that doesn't accommodate full TOD; needs PUD process • Developers may not be interested in TOD due to reliance on municipality to lead • Not enough developers familiar with local markets • Commuter parking vs. parking for downtown businesses (this may be changing) • Residents concerned about loosening parking requirements	• Have TOD plans and relaxed zoning regulations to encourage TOD but need to recruit developers • Use public funds and grants to invest in access infrastructure • Intergovernmental coordination • Reduce parking requirements • Create inclusionary housing ordinances • Increase density allowance for development • Increasing acceptance from the public on multi-family development
Nonprofit & Community-Based Organizations	• Need reliable, safe, and affordable transit service • Limited funds and grants to cover acquisition and construction of TOD (need to consolidate from multiple sources) • Missing last-mile connections between jobs and affordable homes • Need more intergovernmental collaboration • Working with developers to get commitments for community benefits	• Need authentic engagement and hyper-local advisory communities • Promote bike paths for transportation in suburbs (beyond just recreation) • Build consensus among groups with different priorities to get projects built • Messaging for elected officials: economic development + ribbon cuttings • Encourage developers to connect with local groups and residents, not just elected officials

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDEBOOK

The guidebook provides the tools and techniques to local decision-makers, the development community and residents through the region for how to design development and station areas to be more accessible to all.

Chapter 1: Introduction
Why transit friendly design matters

Chapter 2: Transit-Friendly Design Concepts
Illustrative design concepts that depict how to incorporate best practices in different types of community contexts

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Chapter 8: Case Studies
Ten case studies from the Chicago area and across the nation that illustrate best practices through transit-friendly developments and policies

Chapter 9: Implementation
A checklist of policies, programs, and techniques to implement transit-friendly design and ETOD in your community

2. Transit-Friendly Design Concepts

This section presents three design concepts that illustrate how transit-friendly elements can be applied to different types of sites and transit service areas. The three prototypical areas represent common scenarios that are found across the region: a suburban bus corridor, suburban downtown with a train station, and an urban train station and bus route.

While every community is different, the design elements and principles highlighted in each graphic can be incorporated at a variety of scales appropriate for different areas across the region.

Transit-friendly design principles include:

- Equitable transit-oriented development (ETOD)
- Infill development and redevelopment on underutilized parking lots
- Affordable, missing middle, and a variety of housing options
- Mixed-use developments near transit
- Transit access infrastructure
- Micromobility and rideshare integrations with transit
- Pedestrian and bike amenities and infrastructure
- ADA accessibility improvements
- Equity and engagement to guide decision-making

These principles are depicted in the design concepts that follow and described in more detail in Chapters 6 and 7.

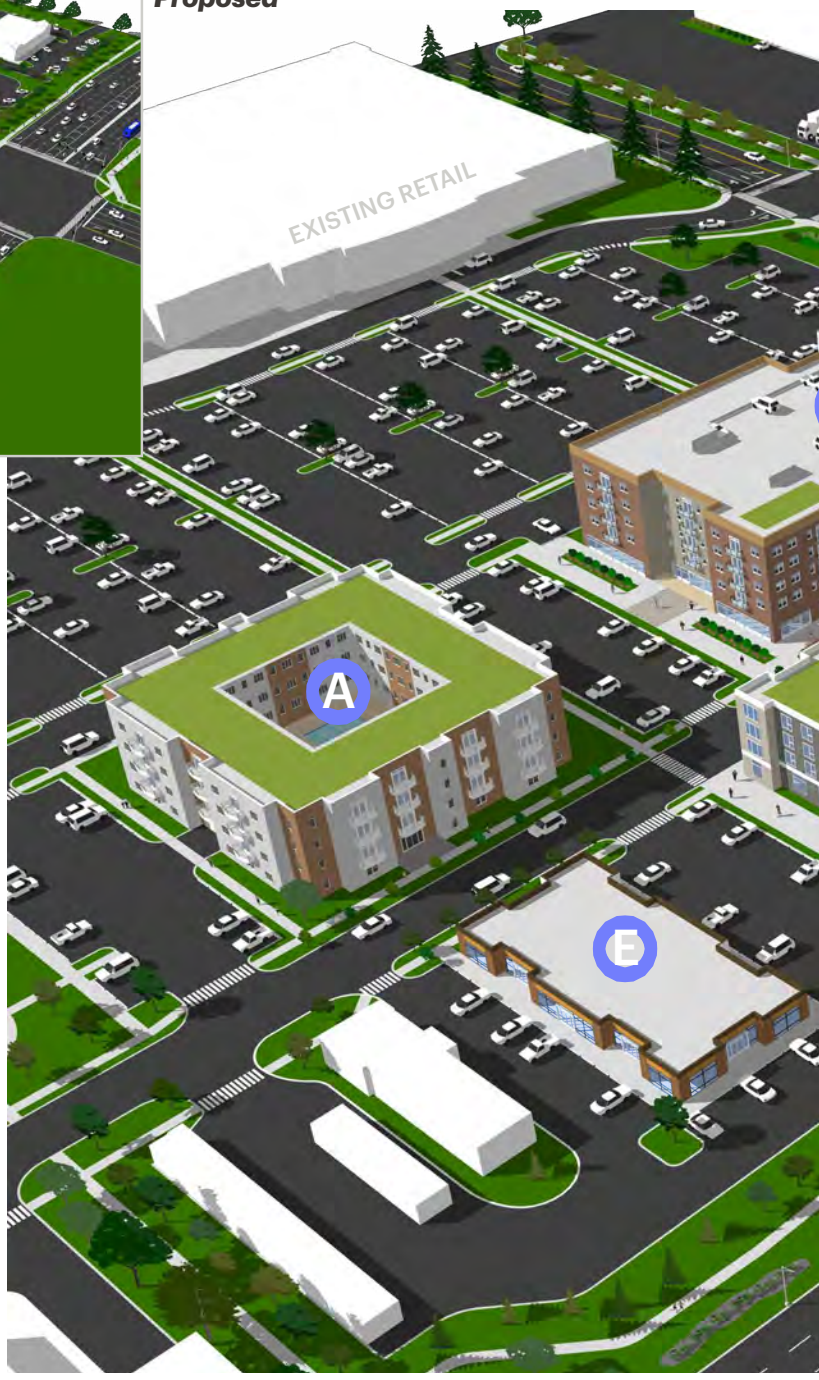
PROTOTYPE DESIGN 1

Commercial Bus Corridor

This concept depicts a bus corridor that has big-box retail stores, large parking lots, and other auto-oriented commercial uses. Transit-friendly enhancements include new residential with increased densities and commercial development on underutilized parking lots, pedestrian connections from the bus stops and sidewalks to building entrances, a new public gathering space, and narrower roadways and enhanced crosswalks to make pedestrian crossings safer.

Figure 2.1 Commercial Bus Corridor - Before

Figure 2.2 Commercial Bus Corridor - Proposed



TRANSIT-FRIENDLY DEVELOPMENT:

- Residential development adds people and activity-generators to support bus ridership; includes structured parking
- Mixed use (residential and commercial) development and public plaza connect directly with bus stop with wrapped parking
- Mixed-income residential with community facility (i.e. daycare) and structured parking
- Hotel built on underutilized parking lot
- Commercial building to serve new residents
- Mixed-use residential and commercial oriented around the plaza; second floor parking
- Redeveloped commercial/office building with parking behind the building
- Townhomes add new residents near transit with a sidewalk connecting to bus stop

Road diet (reducing vehicle lanes to reallocate space for other uses) adds sidewalks and a pedestrian refuge island to enhance safety

High-visibility crosswalks make pedestrians more visible to drivers

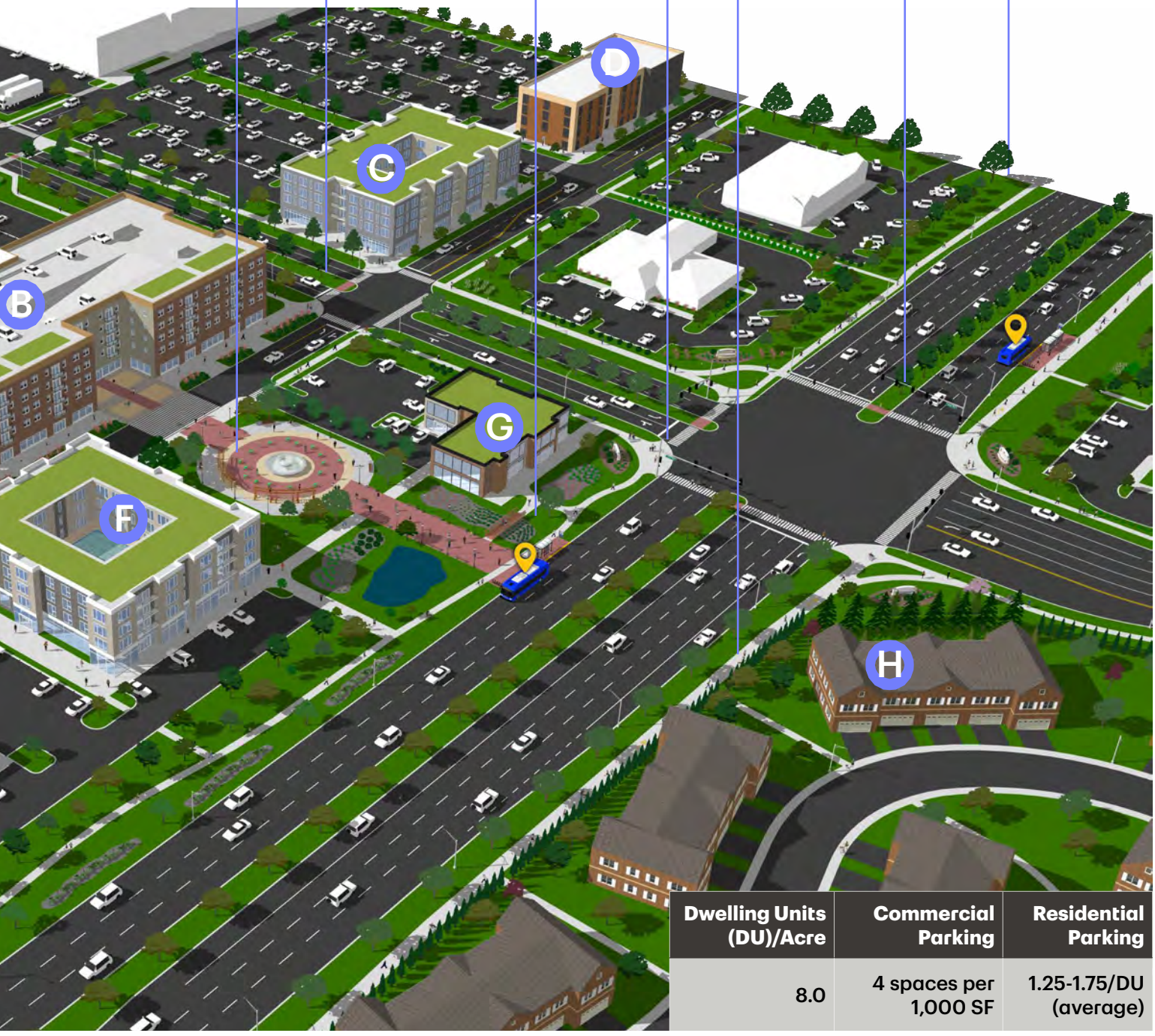
Landscaped median provides pedestrian refuge and calms traffic

Public plaza can be a destination that hosts events like farmers markets, concerts, etc.

Planted buffer space separates sidewalk from roadway to enhance pedestrian environment

Multi-use path connects residential neighborhoods to bus route

Limited curb cuts along the corridor help facilitate efficient bus service



Dwelling Units (DU)/Acre	Commercial Parking	Residential Parking
8.0	4 spaces per 1,000 SF	1.25-1.75/DU (average)

PROTOTYPE STREET SECTION 1

Commercial Bus Corridor

Figure 2.4 on the following page depicts improvements that can make local roads that connect to transit safer and more accessible for pedestrians and bicyclists. Transit-friendly enhancements include: a "road diet" which reduces vehicle travel lanes from four to two (with one left turn lane), new mixed-use development to replace underutilized parking on both sides of the street, a new parking lane for customers of new businesses, a landscaped median/pedestrian refuge island, widened planting strip/sidewalk buffers, and a shared use path for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Figure 2.1 Commercial Bus Corridor - Before

Figure 2.3 Corridor Connecting to Transit - Before

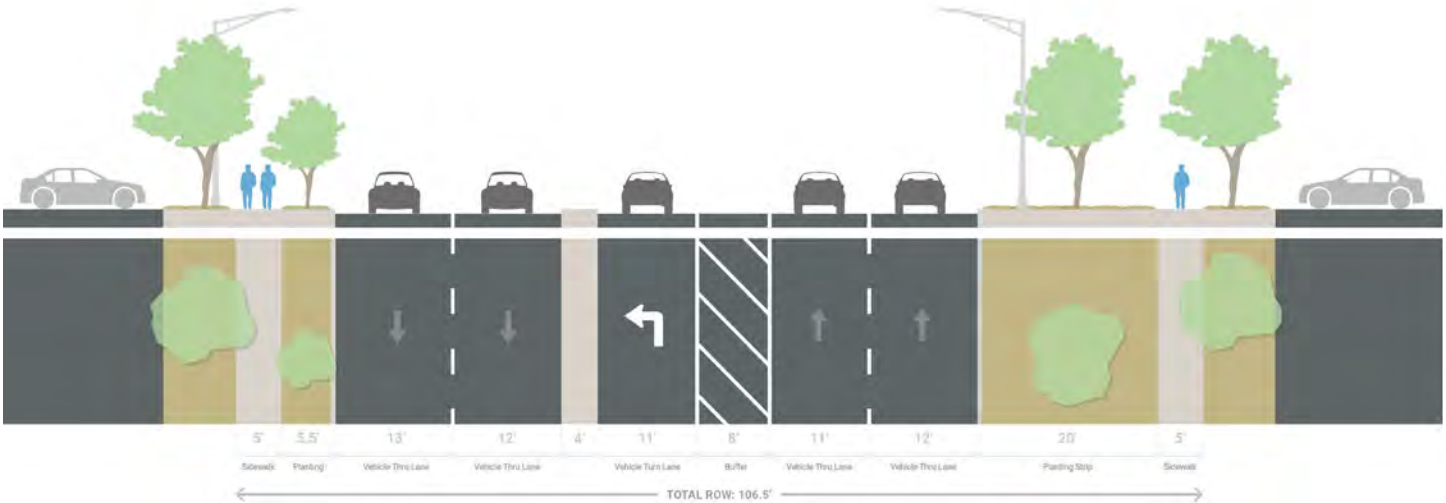
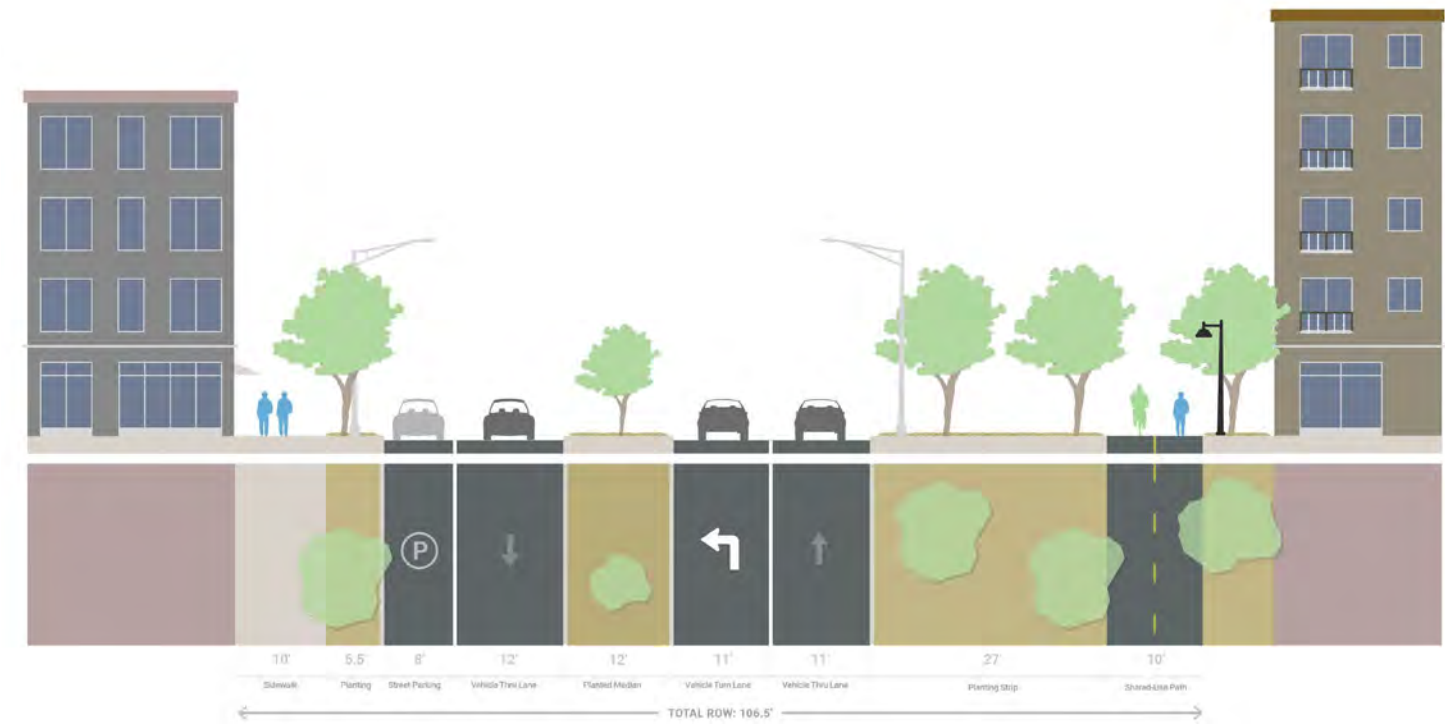


Figure 2.2 Commercial Bus Corridor - Proposed

Figure 2.4 Corridor Connecting to Transit - Proposed

This corridor, which runs perpendicular to a bus route, is redesigned to narrow the right-of-way and repurpose excess vehicle space to prioritize multimodal connections feeding into the transit network. Excess vehicle lanes are replaced with expanded plantings and on-street parking to support commercial uses, and a new shared-use bicycle and pedestrian path (with enhanced lighting) provides high-quality multimodal connections between the transit corridor and new mixed-use development.



PROTOTYPE DESIGN 2

Suburban Downtown

This concept depicts a suburban downtown with a train station, bus service, and an historic Main Street with a mix of retail, restaurants, office, and residential uses.

Transit-friendly enhancements include new mixed-use and residential development on underutilized parking and vacant lots, multi-family housing redevelopment near the train station, enhanced pedestrian connections to/from transit, and a new public gathering space.

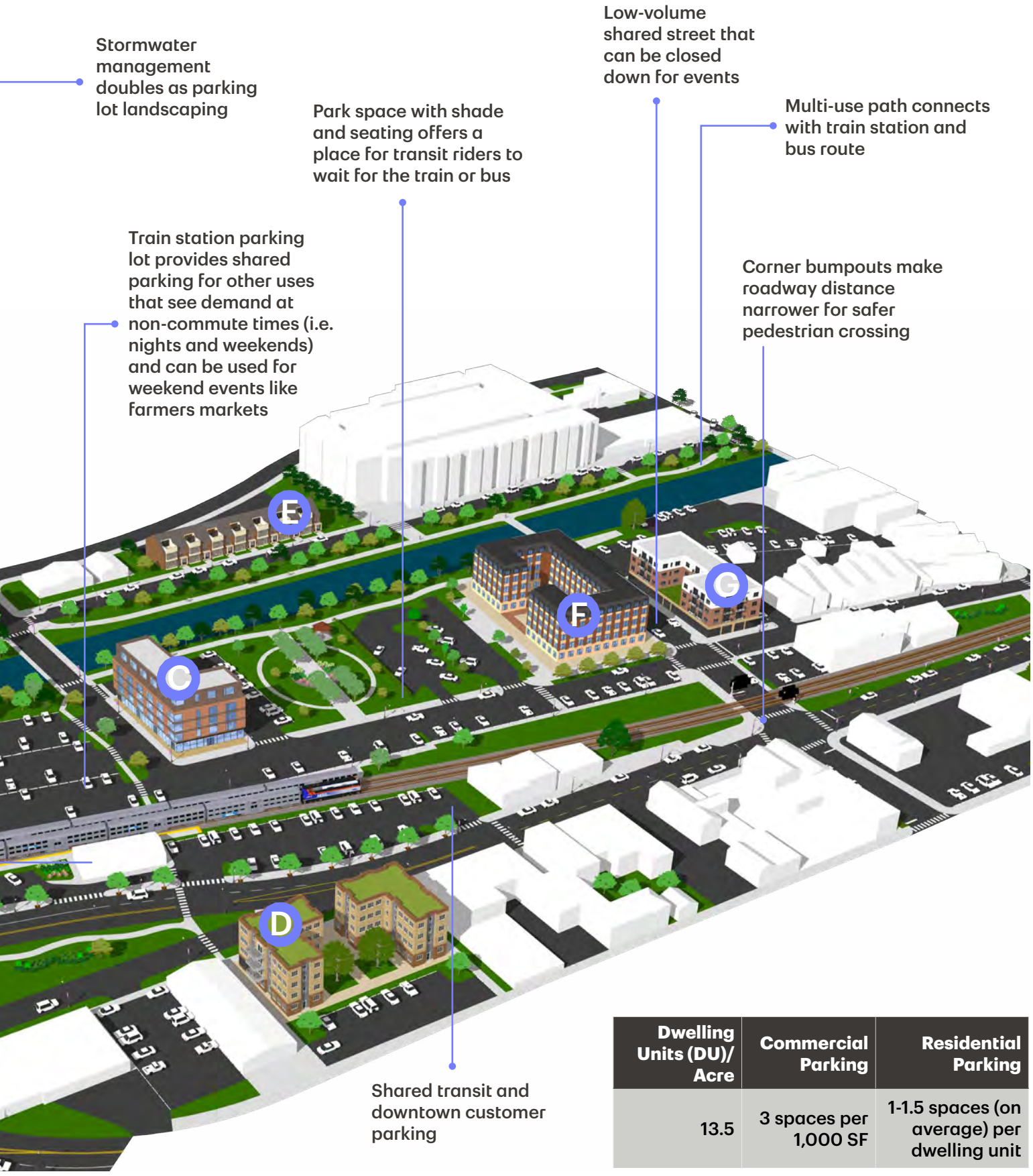
Figure 2.5 Suburban Downtown - Before

Train station is a mobility hub with a bus stop across the street, last-mile connections (such as bike parking, bike- and scooter-share, and pick-up/drop-off area) and other amenities (e.g. warming shelter, digital monitor with transit arrival times)

TRANSIT-FRIENDLY DEVELOPMENT:

- Affordable multi-family housing across from train station redevelops previous outdated use that didn't relate to transit; structured parking
- Multi-family redevelopment of outdated buildings steps from multi-use path, train station, and bus route; indoor garage parking
- Mixed-use and mixed-income development built on previously underutilized parking offers commercial and residential options oriented to transit
- Multi-family housing adds infill development and new residents to support transit
- Attached single-family (townhomes) provides housing close to train and downtown amenities
- Mixed-use residential and commercial with plaza; structured parking
- Mixed-use residential and commercial; structured parking

Figure 2.6 Suburban Downtown - Proposed



Dwelling Units (DU)/ Acre	Commercial Parking	Residential Parking
13.5	3 spaces per 1,000 SF	1-1.5 spaces (on average) per dwelling unit

PROTOTYPE STREET SECTION 2

Suburban Downtown

The street section on the following page illustrates improvements that can make a typical local road near transit safer and more inviting for pedestrians, with a wider sidewalk, curb bumpout to shorten the crossing distance, and enhanced landscaping to foster a more pleasant sidewalk environment.

Figure 2.5 Suburban Downtown - Before

Figure 2.7 Suburban Downtown Corridor Near Transit - Before

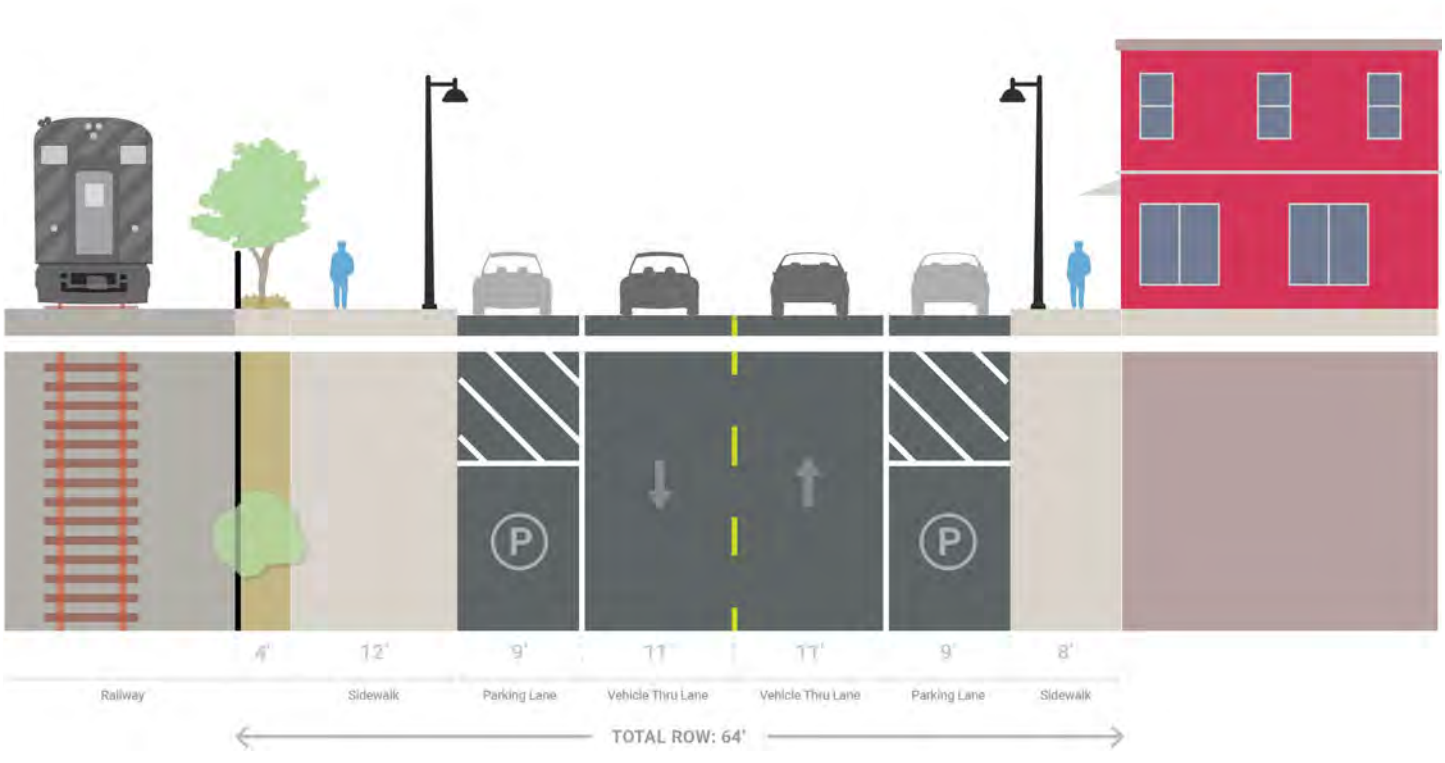


Figure 2.6 Suburban Downtown - Proposed

Figure 2.8 Suburban Downtown Corridor Near Transit - Proposed

Planted curb extensions are installed at intersections to reduce pedestrian crossing distances, enhance corridor aesthetics, and improve stormwater management while maintaining street parking to support businesses. An extra-wide existing crosswalk is partially repurposed for planting space to enhance the tree canopy.

PROTOTYPE DESIGN 3

Urban Train Station & Bus Route

This concept depicts an urban neighborhood with a rail station, bus route, and variety of uses and densities ranging from single-family residential to mid-rise multi-family. Transit-friendly enhancements include new infill residential and commercial development on vacant lots, a bikeshare station, and enhanced crosswalks to make pedestrian crossings safer.

Figure 2.9 Urban Train Station & Bus Route - Before

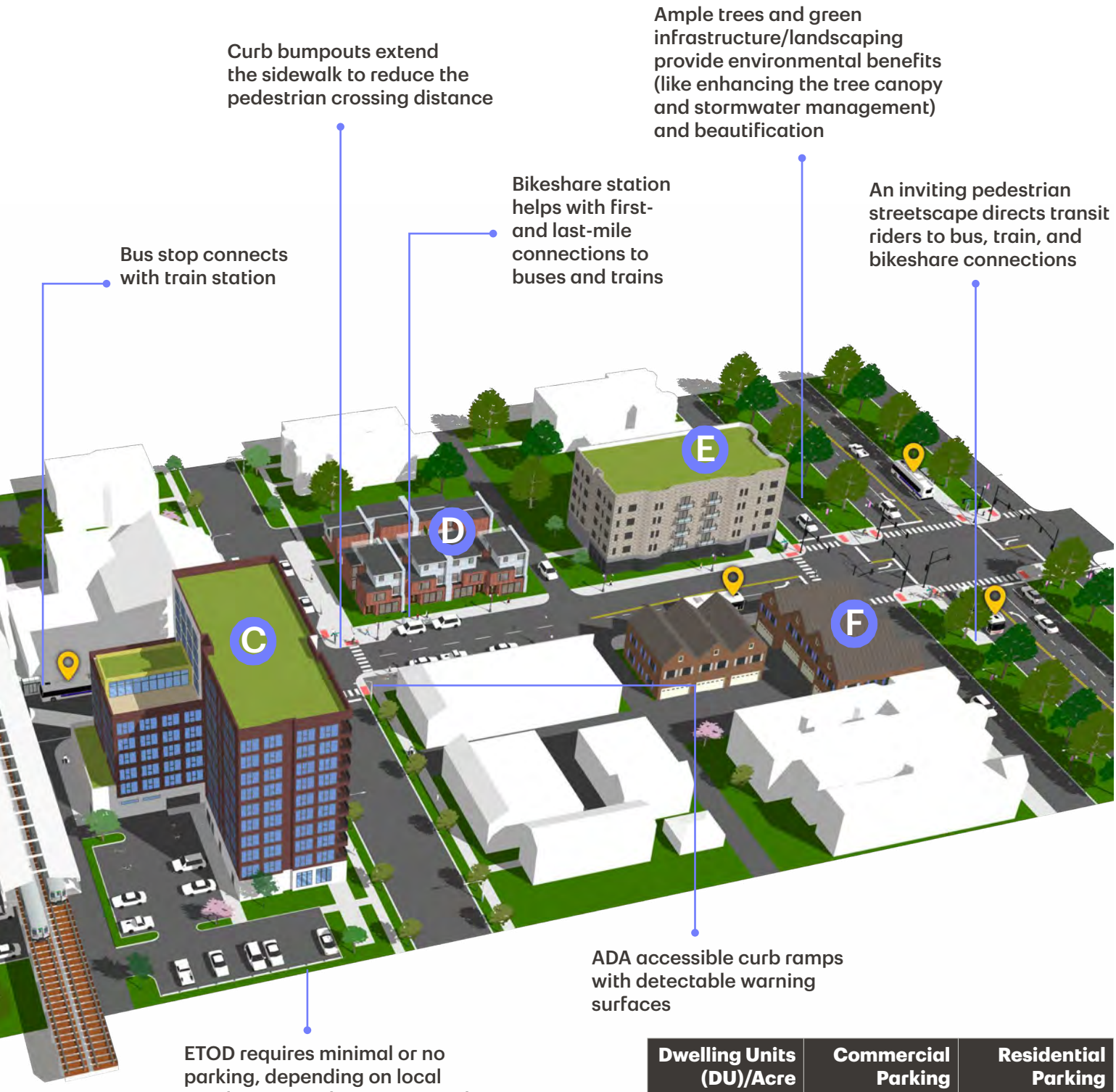
Public plaza adjacent to train station serves as a mobility hub with transit arrival time signage, bike parking, rideshare loading zone, and gathering space

TRANSIT-FRIENDLY DEVELOPMENT:

- Mixed-income residential adds housing to formerly vacant lot adjacent to transit
- Affordable housing next to train station connects residents to jobs
- Mixed use with affordable housing above ground floor commercial
- Townhomes add to the neighborhood's mix of housing options
- Taller multi-family building bookends the corridor, sited along a major bus route
- Townhomes fill a need for more "missing middle" housing

Figure 2.10 Urban Train Station & Bus Route - Proposed

Note: This concept is based in part on the award-winning 43 Green project in the Bronzeville neighborhood of Chicago that reflects many ETOD principles described throughout this guidebook



Dwelling Units (DU)/Acre	Commercial Parking	Residential Parking
33	No off-street parking required	Maximum of 0.5 spaces per dwelling unit

PROTOTYPE STREET SECTION 3

Urban Train Station & Bus Route

The street section on the following page depicts improvements that can make the bus corridor, which connects to the train, more transit-friendly and safer for pedestrians. Improvements include new residential and mixed-use development on formerly vacant lots, sidewalk buffers with new plantings and trees, and curb bump-outs that provide room for a bus shelter and additional space for the bus boarding area. Note: bicyclists are encouraged to primarily use a parallel street that has more space to accommodate bike infrastructure.

Figure 2.9 Urban Train Station & Bus Route - Before

Figure 2.11 Urban Bus Corridor - Before

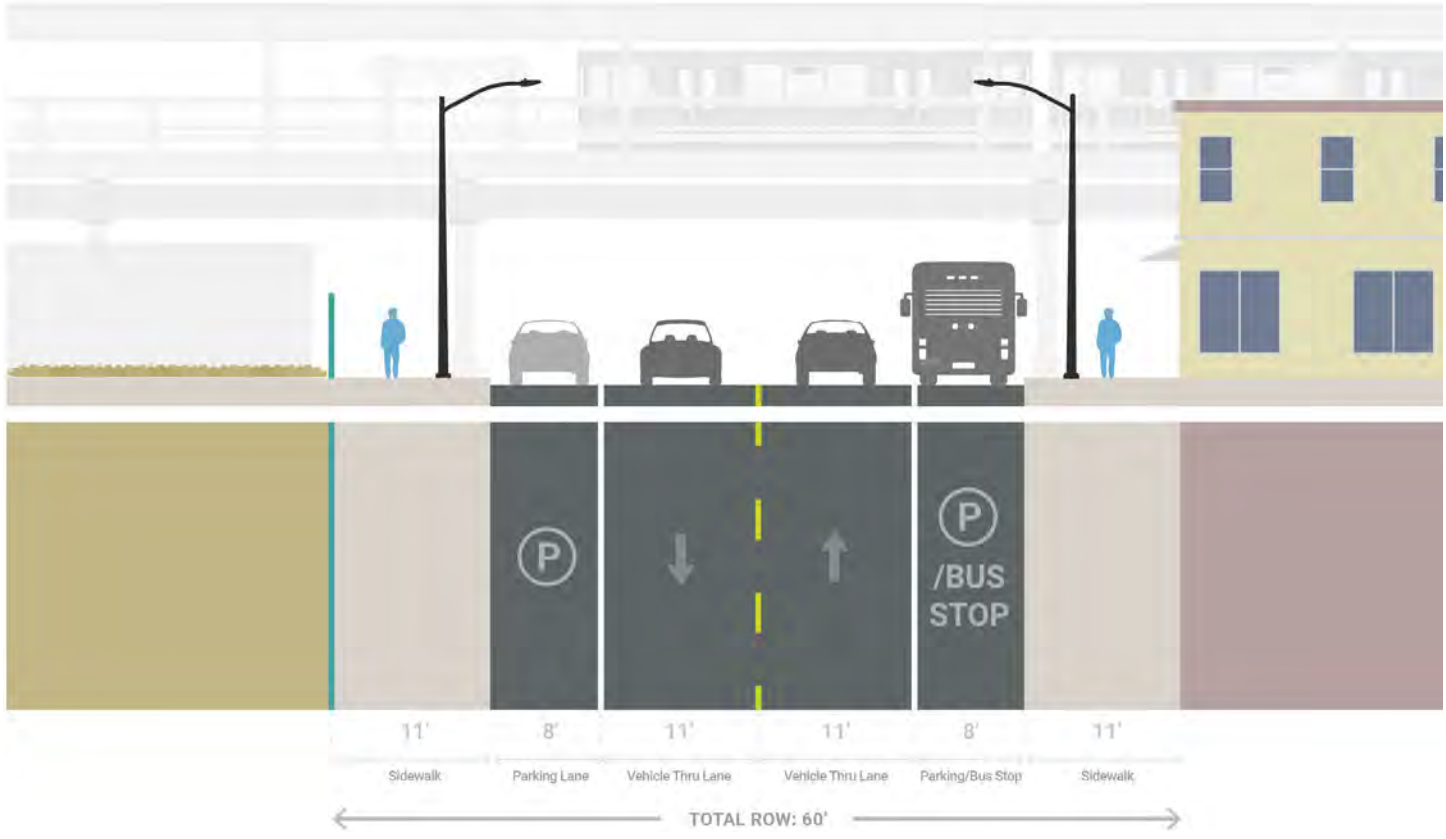


Figure 2.10 Urban Train Station & Bus Route - Proposed

Figure 2.12 Urban Bus Corridor - Proposed

Planted curb extensions are installed at intersections to reduce pedestrian crossing distances, enhance corridor aesthetics, and improve stormwater management while maintaining street parking to support businesses. A bus stop bump-out replaces the existing bus stop in a too-narrow parking lane and allows bus service to stop directly in the travel lane, speeding up service, improving accessibility, and providing space for a bus shelter. An extra-wide crosswalk is partially repurposed for planting space to enhance the tree canopy. New pedestrian-scale lighting improves aesthetics and sense of safety.

3. Transit Services & Transportation Trends

An essential component for equitable transit-oriented development (ETOD) is frequent and reliable transit service. The frequency and reliability of transit service is typically dependent on the density of development—the more potential ridership, the more service can be supported. Transit service in the region is typically a reflection of the density of surrounding development and the trip purpose the service is designed to serve.

REGIONAL TRANSIT SERVICE OVERVIEW

The **Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)** oversees finances, secures funding, and conducts transit-supportive land use planning for Northeast Illinois' three transit agencies: the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Metra, and Pace. These agencies collectively comprise the second-largest transit operation in the country, serving the Northeast Illinois counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will.

The **Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)** provides frequent bus and rapid heavy rail service from early morning to late at night within the City of Chicago and portions of 35 adjoining municipalities. The agency operates eight rapid heavy rail lines (the "L") as well as 127 bus routes, which cover nearly every corner of the city. In August 2024, the CTA recorded an average weekday ridership of 552,000 bus passengers and 406,000 rail passengers.

Pace is the primary provider of suburban bus service and provides ADA paratransit service for the entire region. Additionally, Pace runs several "on-demand" services in communities throughout the region that provide riders with the opportunity to more flexibly select pick-up and drop-off locations to get to their destinations. Pace runs 218 fixed bus routes, which include express commuter buses that utilize interstates as well as express Pace Pulse routes on surface streets with enhanced bus stops. In October 2024, Pace recorded an average weekday ridership of 61,000 bus passengers and 10,600 paratransit passengers. Pace served the highest monthly total of riders throughout its entire system since the COVID-19 pandemic began, with more than 2 million riders in September 2024.[1]

Metra provides long-distance regional rail service connecting suburban communities among each other and to the City of Chicago. Traditionally a commuter service with more frequent departing trains during peak commuting times, Metra has begun a process of modifying its operating schedule on select rail lines toward more frequent all-day service. Metra operates service from more than 240 stations along 11 rail lanes serving 139,900 riders on an average weekday (as of January 2024), a 44% increase from 2022.

Divvy is a shared micromobility system owned by the City of Chicago providing pedal bikes and e-bikes for rent in Chicago and Evanston as well as e-scooters in portions of Chicago. Devices can be picked up and dropped off anywhere in the service area, and the system features more than 1,000 docking stations where devices can be rented from and returned to. Trips tend to average 1-3 miles, providing direct access to nearby destinations as well as connections to other modes for longer-distance trips.

RTA STRATEGIC PLAN: TRANSIT IS THE ANSWER

In 2023, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) adopted *Transit is the Answer*, a regional transit strategic plan. The plan is intended to address the most urgent transit challenges facing the region, including shifting commuting patterns due to COVID and other factors that resulted in a decline in fare revenues. The plan includes both near-term action items focused on improving safety, reliability, accessibility, and sustainability, as well as longer-term strategies to build a stronger and more-resilient regional transit system for the future. This includes strategies to improve and increase transit-oriented development and strategies to enhance and upgrade infrastructure used by riders to access transit services.

Equitable Transit-Oriented Development Strategies

Transit is the Answer calls for the RTA to "support communities' efforts to improve the area around their transit stations/stops and pursue equitable transit-oriented development."[2] The plan includes strategies for the RTA to work proactively with communities to participate in regional funding programs to plan and build more transit-friendly communities, which may include promoting equitable transit-oriented developed (ETOD), developing mobility hubs that bring many modes of travel together in one place, and supporting curb management plans.

Stakeholder working groups consulted in the report supported continuing existing RTA efforts to help communities plan for ETOD at and around transit facilities and pressed for the creation of more affordable, accessible, multi-family housing while preventing displacement of current residents from transit-rich neighborhoods and communities. The plan states that local policies such as land use and zoning regulations are critical elements in making ETOD possible by allowing for a greater variety of uses and residential units near transit stations.

Specifically, the plan calls for the RTA to "assess the regional capital program in a new way including considerations for racial equity and mobility justice" and highlights the importance of investment in historically disadvantaged communities to ensure a holistic and equitable transit system throughout the region. This includes investment in ETOD and affordable housing around transit.

Access Infrastructure Strategies

Transit is the Answer's Action Agenda includes a recommendation to "use new funding as a catalyst to create a fully accessible transit system" and underscores the need to make bus stations and other transit infrastructure ADA accessible. This includes developing a regional plan for accessibility improvement to identify priority areas for investment, as well as encouraging each operator to identify individual goals and develop accessibility plans.

The plan also places a focus on providing local municipalities with funding to invest in sidewalks, crosswalks, and other infrastructure improvements around transit facilities, including helping municipalities implement these improves through the RTA's Access to Transit program. Additionally, the plan recommends that RTA "partner with roadway agencies to build more transit-friendly streets and advance bus rapid transit" in the region.

CTA ACTION PLAN: MEETING THE MOMENT

In 2022, the CTA published *Meeting the Moment*, an action plan to address immediate challenges to the system caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan is primarily focused on near-term changes to improve transit rider experience on board vehicles and at stations. However, the plan also calls for the CTA to launch a long-term strategic planning process to "create a guiding plan that sets the agency up for success in delivering our long-term collective vision for our communities."[3]

Access Infrastructure Strategies

Meeting the Moment calls for upgrading bus stop signs for visually impaired customers, implementing bus priority zones and bus lane infrastructure, and upgrading 100+ bus stops for accessibility improvements. The plan also recommends closer coordination with the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT).

PACE STRATEGIC PLAN: DRIVING INNOVATION

In 2021, Pace published the agency's latest strategic vision plan, *Driving Innovation*. The plan highlights a transition from focusing on suburban-centric service to regional mobility—a result of the evolving ridership trends and other changes that have affected public transit agencies across the nation. The plan states that this transition means that Pace will take a proactive role in coordinating with other mobility providers to ensure multimodal compatibility throughout the region, allowing users a seamless transition between different modes. Additionally, the plan declares that "much of the region needs improvement when it comes to walkability and land-use, as transit customers frequently face missing sidewalks and sprawling development."[4]

Transit-Friendly Design Strategies

Driving Innovation recommends establishing clear expectations for level of service and transit amenities that municipalities and the development community can expect for building transit-supportive developments. This includes identifying land-use typologies conducive to high quality transit service and developing a system for designing service that heavily weights population density, development density, and walkability. Pace's *Transit Supportive Guidelines* document from 2013 provides guidance to municipalities, roadway agencies, and developers for properly designing infrastructure and promoting development that supports transit. There were two addendums to the *Transit Supportive Guidelines* in 2024 which provide additional guidelines for Pace Pulse and updates to the guidelines for Pace infrastructure and facilities, including bus stop design, roadway improvements, and offstreet facilities.

Access Infrastructure Strategies

Driving Innovation calls for Pace to continue updating passenger facilities to comply with ADA standards, and recommends Pace establish standards for transit-friendly streets. This includes standardizing the sizing and maintenance of sidewalks, providing amenities for pedestrians and transit riders, creating priority lanes for transit vehicles, developing traffic-calming measures for automobiles, and redesigning intersections. The program would assess key corridor factors that create successful transit services such as needed improvements to pedestrian infrastructure and bus stops, land use impacts to the pedestrian environment and appropriate service types and levels. Finally, the plan recommends that Pace collaborates with municipalities and roadway agencies to pursue quick-build infrastructure improvements to enhance operations, access, and safety.

METRA STRATEGIC PLAN: MY METRA, OUR FUTURE

In 2023, the Metra Board adopted *My Metra, Our Future* as a strategic plan that will guide the agency's decision-making until 2027. The plan marks Metra's transition from a commuter rail service to a regional rail service in the post-pandemic era: "Metra is still committed to peak period service for downtown work trips, but we must also adapt to changes in rider behavior and demand. We plan to do this by moving toward a 'regional rail' service model. Metra will provide service at more frequent intervals throughout the day for all trip types, and we will also explore targeted opportunities within the region to serve new, underserved ridership markets and destinations."[5]

Transit-Friendly Design Policies

The plan states that one of Metra's values is to contribute to sustainable land use development. "Metra stations are recognized as a key destination in the downtowns of many suburban municipalities and are essential in attracting TOD, multimodal development, and economic opportunities in the region, while also being a force in reducing the region's greenhouse gas emissions." According to the plan, Metra will continue to improve station areas and facilities, and Metra may evaluate parking lot utilization for potential redevelopment. The plan places specific attention on improving ADA compliance at stations and implementing more grade-crossing improvements. Additionally, Metra commits to actively participating in local and regional projects that plan for resilient, sustainable communities, combat climate change, and promote transit-supportive developments.

TRANSPORTATION TRENDS

The Chicago region is the third largest metro area in the nation, an economic center for the nation and a chief logistics hub. Over the past several years, changing trends have emerged in the region influencing transportation patterns in multiple ways.

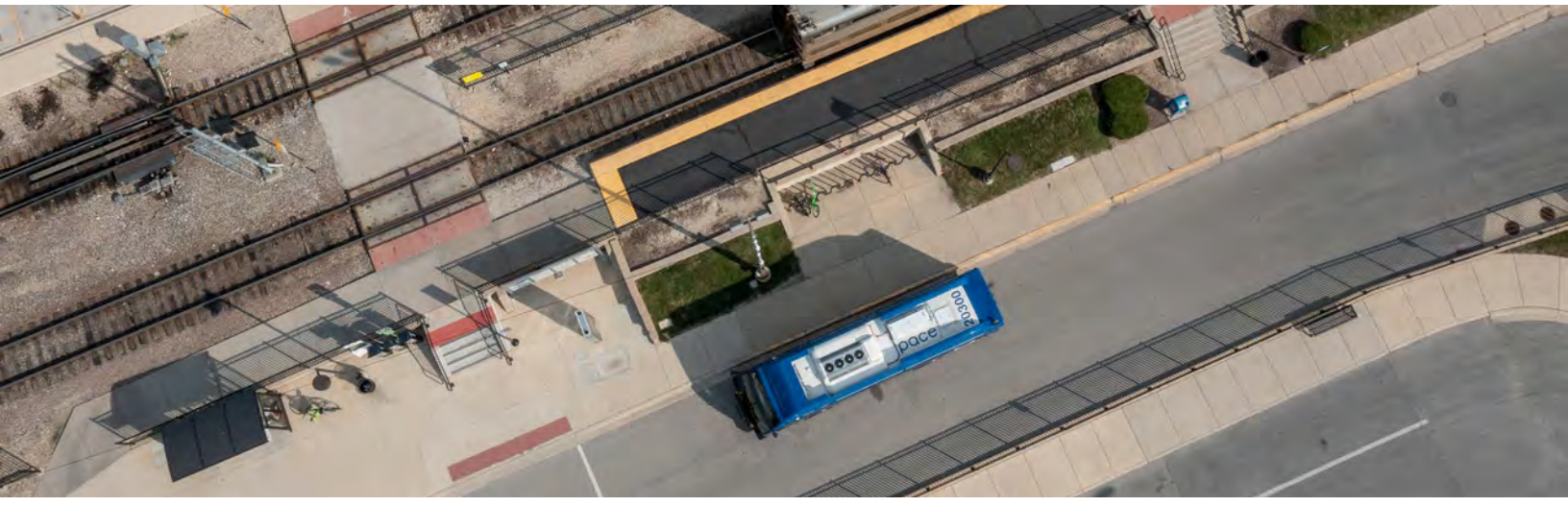
Transit ridership is beginning to recover

Transit services in Chicagoland are provided by CTA, Metra, and Pace, connecting suburban communities to Chicago as well as linking neighborhoods in Chicago with each other. Public transit ridership in the Chicago region fell dramatically in 2020 (by over half, as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic) but has slowly been increasing and climbing towards pre-pandemic ridership.

Figure 3.1: RTA System Ridership (annually, in millions)

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
CTA Bus	237.3	121.4	117.4	140	161.7
CTA Rail	218.5	76	78.6	103.5	117.4
Metra	61.5	16.7	14.1	23.8	31.9
Pace	28.5	14.6	13.2	14.6	16
Pace ADA	4	2.2	2.3	2.6	2.9
System	549.7	230.9	225.6	284.5	330

Source: RTA



Car ownership costs

According to the Center for Neighborhood Technology, the cost of car ownership in the region is more than $1,100 per month.[6] Reducing vehicle use or reducing the number of vehicles a household needs to own can offer substantial financial savings.

Car Ownership

Car ownership is a factor when analyzing transit preferences in each community. Lower rates of car ownership are correlated with greater population density and greater access to transit across the region. The percentage of dwelling units that do not own a car was approximately 27% in the City of Chicago, 7% in suburban Cook County and 4% in other counties.

Auto traffic has returned to pre-pandemic levels

Annual vehicle miles traveled (VMT) refers to a measure of the amount of vehicular travel in a geographic region over a given period of time. According to the annual travel statistics published by IDOT, VMT across the RTA region dropped from 60 million in 2019 to 51 million in 2020 (a 15.5% decrease). Cook County saw the steepest decline (16%) compared to other counties. These drops in VMT were short-lived, however–by 2022, virtually the entire decrease in VMT had returned (and at a faster rate than the increase in transit ridership).

Figure 3.2: Change in Annual Vehicle Miles Travelled

	2019-2020	2020-2022
Cook County	-16%	13%
DuPage County	-19%	15%
Kane County	-13%	16%
Lake County	-14%	15%
McHenry County	-12%	14%
Will County	-14%	12%
Total	**-16%**	**14%**

Source: IDOT

Work-from-home has reduced traditional commuter traffic

COVID-19 shifted work preferences for both employers and employees, when many office workers shifted to remote work in 2020-2021. Since then, working from home has not disappeared, even as many occupations have returned to the office.

There has been a significant increase in the percentage of employees who work from home, generally from four to five percent in each county in 2010 to 13% to 17% in 2022.

Despite this increase, however, the portion of workers who "work from home" is still a minority (17% of workers in DuPage County is the largest share in the region). The large majority of commuters across the RTA region still drive alone to work, although the total share of workers driving to work has declined in each county.

Congestion

As auto traffic has returned to pre-pandemic levels, congestion has as well. According to a 2022 report from mobility analytics company INRIX,[7] Chicago-area drivers lost more hours to congestion that any other city in the U.S. and more than any city globally except for London. The average Chicago-area driver experienced 155 hours of traffic delay in 2022, which was a 7% increase from 2019.

ETOD aims to reduce congestion in a number of ways: 1) reducing car trips by locating housing next to commercial and other uses and 2) providing easier access to transit to reach other destinations. As a result, households costs can be lowered by reducing the need to drive and/or own a car. Households will have fewer or even no cars depending on their needs and destinations. ETOD can therefore reduce the number of cars on the road, congestion, and air pollution.

Safety

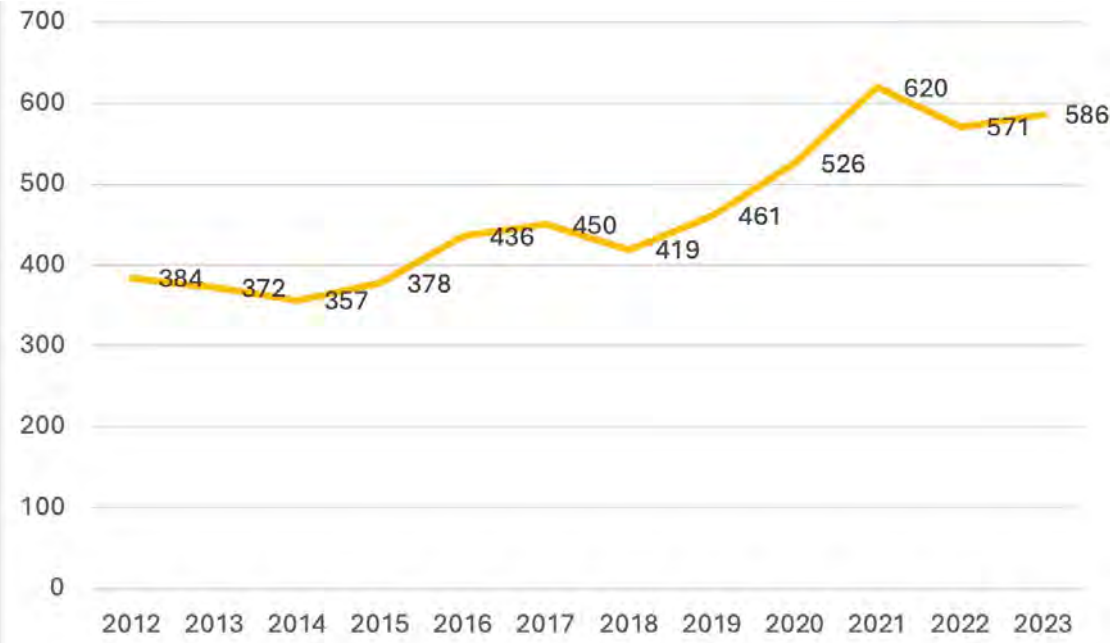
Between 2012 and 2023, fatal motor vehicle traffic crashes in the six counties comprising the RTA service area have soared more than 52% over the past decade.

Safety is important not just on major arterials but extends to local roads in communities. As detailed in the Access Infrastructure section of this Guidebook, a number of strategies can be taken to improve safety, particularly for pedestrians and bicyclists. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation Traffic Safety Facts 2021 data:[8]

- There were 7,388 pedestrians killed in traffic crashes, a 12.5% increase from 2020. This is the highest since 1981 when 7,837 pedestrians died in traffic crashes.
- There were an estimated 60,577 pedestrians injured in traffic crashes, an 11% increase from 2020.
- Pedestrian deaths accounted for 17% of all traffic fatalities.
- 15% of the children 14 and younger killed in traffic crashes were pedestrians.

All of these data points illustrate the challenges facing local decision-makers, transit agencies and the development community. This Guidebook offers options that can help a greater share of our region's households and businesses take advantage of transit and reduce the cost and dependence on cars.

Figure 3.3 RTA Service Area Fatal Vehicle Crashes



Source: IDOT Crash Data

4. Land Use & Market Trends

The Chicago region has seen significant changes in market trends that influence commercial, residential, and industrial development. Some of these trends reinforce the importance of transit-friendly design, especially those that highlight the demand for walkable districts with retail, entertainment, and housing. Other trends, such as reduced occupancies of office space and commercial development, make it more challenging for communities to attract economic development. Collectively these trends point to a need to update local codes to respond to changes in the marketplace that can foster transit-friendly design including mixed-uses, multi-family residential development, and more walkable communities.

Demographic trends refer to changes in the characteristics of a population over time. These characteristics may include age, gender, race and ethnicity, income, and more. A solid analysis of demographic trends underpins all major transit planning decisions made by government and transit agencies to meet the needs of the target population, from transit network optimization, to service provision, and infrastructure investment.

ETOD policies aim to meet current land use and market demands by allowing more types of housing and commercial development in proximity to transit – whether that is achieved by reclaiming an underutilized parking lot for infill housing development or by allowing a greater mix of land uses in a zoning ordinance.

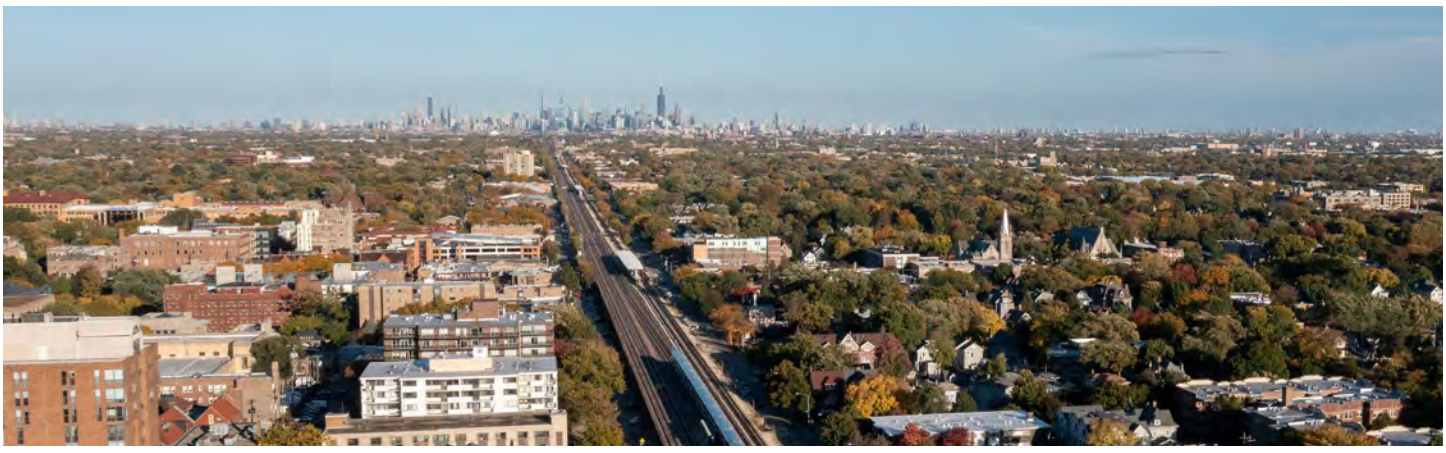
Population Growth

The Chicago region has experienced modest population growth over the past twenty years from 2000 to 2020. The total population of the six-county Chicago region (Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will Counties) has increased by approximately 354,146 (or 4%) to 8,445,866 people. (CMAP, U.S. Census American Community Survey 2021). With a shift from the City of Chicago and Cook County to DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will Counties, that generally have lower density of development, and thus more challenging to provide transit. Yet many of these suburban areas are working on ways to become more walkable, bikeable and transit oriented, particularly in their downtowns and business districts.

A Changing Region

The Chicago region is a hub of diverse cultures and ethnicities. Public transit can be a critical and affordable travel means for many communities, providing access to jobs, education, healthcare, and other essential services. Many new residents to the region or first-generation immigrants bring with them distinct expectations for transit and different travel habits that can benefit from increased transit access. Furthermore, multigenerational families, more single-person households, and a growing senior population is changing demand for a wider range of housing types, access to health care and other amenities.

For example, the report "Latinos in the Suburbs," released in 2023 by the Latino Policy forum, Metropolitan Planning Council and UIC Great Cities Institute found that the Latino population in the Chicago suburbs and exurbs has grown faster than anywhere else in Illinois. Many of these residents depend on transit to get to school, work or shopping. By providing more housing and jobs near transit, residents would be able to save on transportation costs and not have to rely on driving to each destination. Transit friendly design can open up additional options for residents of the region, but may require changes in land use practices to allow for a greater mix of uses, clustered development patterns, and a more pedestrian friendly environment.



COMMERCIAL MARKET TRENDS

Land use patterns critically shape the demand for and functionality of transit services and infrastructure. Vibrant commercial districts and well-designed residential development can attract new residents and economic investment. Therefore it is important to understand the current trends in land use patterns and markets of different industries in the Chicago region.

Commercial Market

This commercial land use analysis focuses on retail and office, as those uses generate the most demand for transit to access jobs, shopping, entertainment, and recreation. Commercial land uses, such as office spaces or retail businesses, are the main destination for the commuting population which has traditionally traveled during rush hour periods and determines the peak usage of transit. These trends are changing as employees shift from 9-5 commutes, five days per week to more flexible hybrid commute patterns. These changes are leading to changing transit demands and services – from focusing on traditional rush hours to more consistent service throughout the day.

Retail

Several factors and trends have impacted retail development in the region. Increasing e-commerce has shifted more people away from physical retailers, leading to increased overhead costs for retailers, and an oversaturation of retail spaces. The vacancy rate in the Chicago region has increased from 11% to 13% and the pace of inventory growth is slower than the national rate (4.4% vs. 5.5%).[1] Annual absorption (i.e. the rate at which space is leased) is very low at 234,166 SF per year across the Chicago region. The COVID-19 pandemic further impacted the retail sector, exacerbating existing trends and accelerating the shift towards e-commerce.

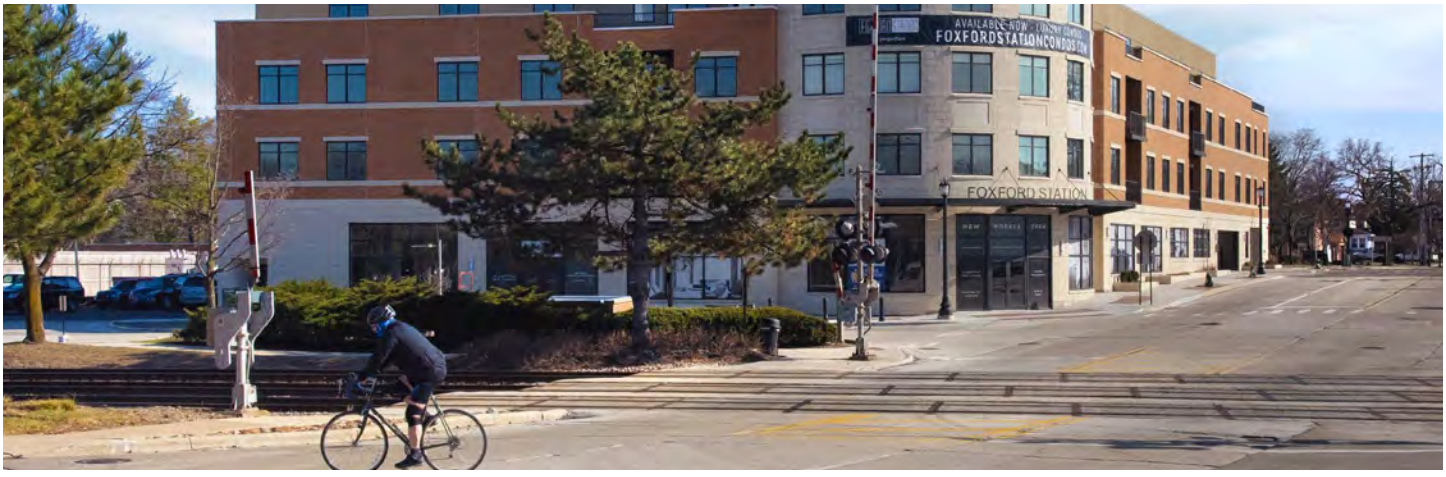
COMMERCIAL MARKET TRENDS (CONT.)

Office

The office market in the Chicago region has been experiencing decline for the past ten years, with high vacancy rates between 17% and 19%. Meanwhile, the annual growth of inventory is about 0.7% and absorption is about 1.5 million square feet per year regionwide. It took the Chicago region's office market a few years to recover from the last recession in 2008 and enter steady growth again—that is, until the pandemic hit the region. The temporary but massive closure of offices across the region and other workplaces, along with months of fully remote work, made the demand for offices drop to the post-recession level. Decreasing demand for offices is one of the direct impacts on commuting habits and transportation patterns. Changes in hybrid work and work-from-home has increased the demand for transit during off-peak hours.

Industrial

The industrial market in the Chicago region has been very strong. The strategic location of the region as a transportation hub has positioned it as a major logistics and distribution center for the Midwest and beyond. As a result, demand for industrial tenants has been high, with low vacancies. During pre-pandemic years, the vacancy rate had already seen a steady decrease to below 10%. The COVID pandemic led to booming e-commerce and remote work, resulting in even higher demand for logistics and a vacancy rate that has reduced to just 3%. Inventory and absorption are also showing positive trends with an annual increase of 1.4% and 17 million square feet, which proves the high demand for industrial space in the region.[2] In addition to the traffic created by logistic firms, many employees of those firms need to commute to in-person jobs. While logistics were traditionally located in large tracts at the edge of the region, there has been an increasing trend of infill distribution uses in areas with greater access to transit for employees.



HOUSING MARKET TRENDS

Two key housing trends will continue to inform planning for transit-friendly communities:

1. Increasing demand for rental housing
The majority of housing units in the Chicago region are owner-occupied, but this is starting to change. Renter occupied housing has increased in each county since 2010. This is occurring due to a variety of factors driven by increased demand for rental housing and changing demographics, employment patterns, income and housing costs.

2. Rising housing costs
Home prices and rents have grown significantly, among the top rates of increase nationally, since 2022. For homebuyers, mortgage rates have increased from historic low rates of just under 3% in 2020 to over 7%.[3] Pressures on both renters and homeowners have led to increased housing costs. High interest rates have also made it more difficult to develop additional housing, creating a backlog that will take time to return to prior levels. High cost burden and low inventory demonstrates the need for more housing, particularly near transit which reduces transportation costs (often the second highest portion of a household budget after housing expenses).

Single-Family Housing

The majority of households in the Chicago region live in single-family, detached housing, but it depends on the area. Forty percent of Cook County residents live in single-family, detached housing, while approximately 60% or more residents of the "collar" counties do. Large lot, low-density single-family development cannot support most fixed-route bus service. There may, however, be opportunities to plan for smaller lot single-family homes, attached single-family homes, allowing Accessory Dwelling Units, and mixed housing types that allow for greater transit accessibility.

Multi-Family Housing

Multi-family housing, one of the key drivers of ETOD, remains strong in the Chicago region. Limited supply is driving up prices, and vacancy is very low. In 2022, Chicago year-over-year rent growth was 13% in the Chicago region (Metropolitan Statistical Area), and median rent rose to $2,591 per month. The region is facing a very tight market with 96.4% occupancy. Rent in certain areas that are well-served by transit were even higher, in both the City of Chicago and suburban areas.[4] Limited construction and growing demand for rental housing has pushed prices up, making rents unaffordable to many households.

HOUSING MARKET TRENDS (CONT.)

Affordable, Workforce, and Missing Middle Housing

Transportation and housing are two of the main living costs for most households. High costs on these two essentials cause stress on many households, from low-income to working and middle-class households. Therefore, as housing affordability and transportation costs are closely interconnected aspects of living quality, a deliberate approach that looks at both issues together is increasingly necessary.

Affordability

A housing unit is considered affordable if housing related costs (rent or mortgage, insurance and utilities) are 30% or less of total household income. This has become a challenging benchmark to achieve, due to increasing mortgage rates, rents, and property values. Over the past decade, more than 40 percent of households in the region pay over 30% of their income toward housing costs. In fact, approximately 40 percent of renters in each of the six counties pay more than 35% of income toward rent, and between 17 percent (in McHenry County) and 25% (in Cook County) of homeowners pay more than 35% of their income toward their mortgage and related housing expenses.

Due to the limited supply of housing near many transit stations/stops, costs may be even higher for housing located within walking distance to transit. ETOD policies aim to address these challenges by promoting policies that will add more affordable units near existing transit stations and routes. This may require public private partnerships, additional funding sources and greater flexibility in zoning codes.

Income limits for most housing programs are based on Area Median Income (AMI). In the Chicago-Naperville-Joliet Metro Fair Market Rent (FMR) area, rental programs are generally based on 60% of AMI, and homeownership programs are generally based on 80% of AMI. For example, a four-person headed household could earn up to $67,260 for a rental unit or $89,700 for a for-sale unit. Those limits would equate to approximately $1,680 for a rental unit or a mortgage payment of up to approximately $2,240 per month (including utilities and property taxes). With rising prices for both rental units and for-sale housing, it has become difficult for many households to find housing, let alone households at lower incomes.

Example of transit-oriented, smaller scale multi-family mixed-use development

Housing Choices

Over the past decade there has been an increase in the development of multifamily housing – from townhomes to apartment and condo buildings in many areas including around transit stations. Still, the overall share of single-family detached housing continues to predominate in most suburban areas as well as in many areas of the City of Chicago. While attached single-family homes remain an important part of the housing stock, changes in demographics, affordability, aging of the population and household composition leads to demand for greater choices in the marketplace.

Zoning often precludes any type of multi-family housing, including townhomes and apartments. In fact, an analysis of the City of Chicago's zoning districts found that of the land area that allows residential uses, 66% of that area does not allow condominiums, townhomes and apartments.[5] The Connected Communities ordinance that the City of Chicago passed in 2022 is beginning to address that by allowing for greater densities of housing and commercial development within ½ mile of CTA and Metra rail and ¼ mile of high frequency CTA bus lines. Many suburban areas have an even higher proportion of residential zoning that does not allow any multi-family units, including duplexes or other small residential buildings.

Workforce Housing

The term "workforce housing" is most often used to indicate programs targeted at households that earn too much to qualify for traditional housing subsidy programs such as housing choice vouchers.[6] Programs include employer-assisted housing, support for public employees such as teachers and public safety, and "light" subsidies such as home and roof repair.

Missing Middle

One of the growing trends in the region is recognition that there is a "missing middle" of housing types, referring both to the scale of buildings and the cost-point. As discussed above, single-family detached housing predominates most residential land uses across the region. Missing middle opportunities are designed to be compatible with single-family areas by promoting designs such as duplexes, small townhome developments, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) that allow an additional unit on a single-family lot. This category of housing types encourages designs that are "house scale" to fit into the existing context of neighborhoods.

Missing middle housing also responds to the need for lower-cost, more attainable housing by a) increasing the supply of housing, which can lower demand and bring costs down, b) supporting smaller units that may cost less and c) dividing the cost of land by more units.

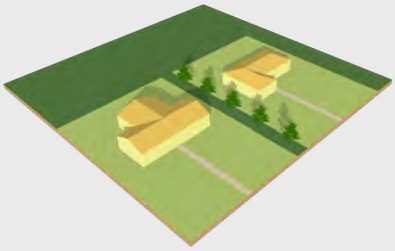
These policies address the needs of different types of households, often at different points in their lives, from young singles and couples looking for a small unit with private space to empty-nesters and retirees looking for a flat without stairs to a multigenerational family that might want a townhome or duplex. In our region today, many of these options are not allowable under local zoning or require planned development approvals that are complex, expensive and lack predictability.

Duplex that blends into a single-family block

LAND USE DENSITIES & TRANSIT SERVICE

Figure 4.1 summarizes the optimum land use densities and characteristics that support varying levels of transit services provided by Pace, CTA, and Metra. Given how much of the region is zoned for single-family detached housing, current densities are often not high enough to support high-frequency transit. Transit-friendly designs can increase the number of housing units and commercial space while still providing the benefits of open space, walkable and bikeable areas, and access to amenities. Densities identified in the table (as dwelling units or 'DU' per acre) would ideally be continued across an entire bus corridor or station area, and employees per acre varies greatly depending on land use mix.

Figure 4.1 Land Use Densities & Transit Service Comparisons

	Characteristics	Optimum Density Needed	Examples
Pace On Demand & Dial-a-Ride 	• Reservation-based, ADA accessible shared-ride service in 11 designated service areas	4 - 6 DU PER ACRE *Employment Density Varies* *Single-family neighborhood* 	Arlington Heights-Rolling Meadows, Naperville-Aurora, Wheaton-Winfield
Pace Fixed Route Bus 	• Operate on set schedules, primarily in the suburbs • Frequencies tailored to demand • Frequent stops	8 - 12 DU PER ACRE *- and/or -* *30 Employees Per Acre* *Attached + detached single family and commercial* 	Golf Road, Busse Highway, Lincoln Avenue, Green Bay Road, Wolf Road, Mannheim-La Grange Roads
Metra Rail 	• Regional rail service connecting suburban communities among each other and to the City of Chicago • High capacity and speed • Wide station spacing	10+ DU PER ACRE *Employment Density Varies* *Suburban Downtown* 	Orland Park 143rd Street, Arlington Heights, Ravenswood, Winnetka

	Characteristics	Optimum Density Needed	Examples
CTA Fixed Route Bus 	• Frequent service • High capacity buses • Frequent stops • Operates primarily in City of Chicago	12-18 DU PER ACRE *- and/or -* *75 Employees Per Acre* *Mixed Residential and Commercial* 	Lawrence Ave, 79th Street, Western Ave, Stony Island
Pace Pulse 	• Premium limited-stop bus service with enhanced speed, amenities, and a streamlined route design • Serves heavily traveled corridors of Chicagoland	12-14 DU PER ACRE *- and/or -* *75 Employees Per Acre* *Multi-Family and Commercial* 	Dempster Line, Milwaukee Line In development: South Halsted, 95th Street, Cermak
Bus Rapid Transit 	• Pre-paid fares • Dedicated bus lanes • Fewer stops • Extra loading areas • Transit signal priority • Queue jumps • High-quality stations • Vehicle enhancements	14+ DU PER ACRE *- and/or -* *75 Employees Per Acre* *Multi-Family and Commercial* 	Indianapolis' IndyGo BRT
CTA Rail 	• Frequent service all day • High capacity and speed • Dedicated right-of-way • High fixed and operating cost	14+ DU PER ACRE *- and/or -* *75+ Employees Per Acre* *Urban Neighborhood* 	Belmont, Harlem/ Lake, Midway, Main Street - Evanston, 95th/ Dan Ryan, Dempster-Skokie

NOTE: Density levels align with Pace's Transit Supportive Guidelines

EXPANDING ETOD IN THE REGION

The RTA conducted an analysis of existing residential density levels around rail stations to understand how the recommended densities by mode (Figure 4.1) compare to existing conditions and the potential for additional development to meet transit service standards. Figures 4.2 and 4.3 depict the average number of dwelling units within a quarter mile from CTA and Metra rail stations.

Key Findings

City of Chicago:

- The average residential density around CTA and Metra rail stations in Chicago is 20 DU/acre, exceeding the optimal density level of 14 or more DU/acre to support CTA rail. This number includes downtown CTA and Metra rail stations, which skews this density level higher.
- Average density levels were lower on the South and West Sides of Chicago than the North Side, meaning there is great potential for additional housing near existing rail stations in these areas. The City of Chicago's Connected Communities Ordinance and Affordable Requirements Ordinance (ARO) and various City of Chicago planning and development programs aim to address this gap.

Figure 4.2 CTA 1/4 Mile Station Area Dwelling Units (DU) Per Acre

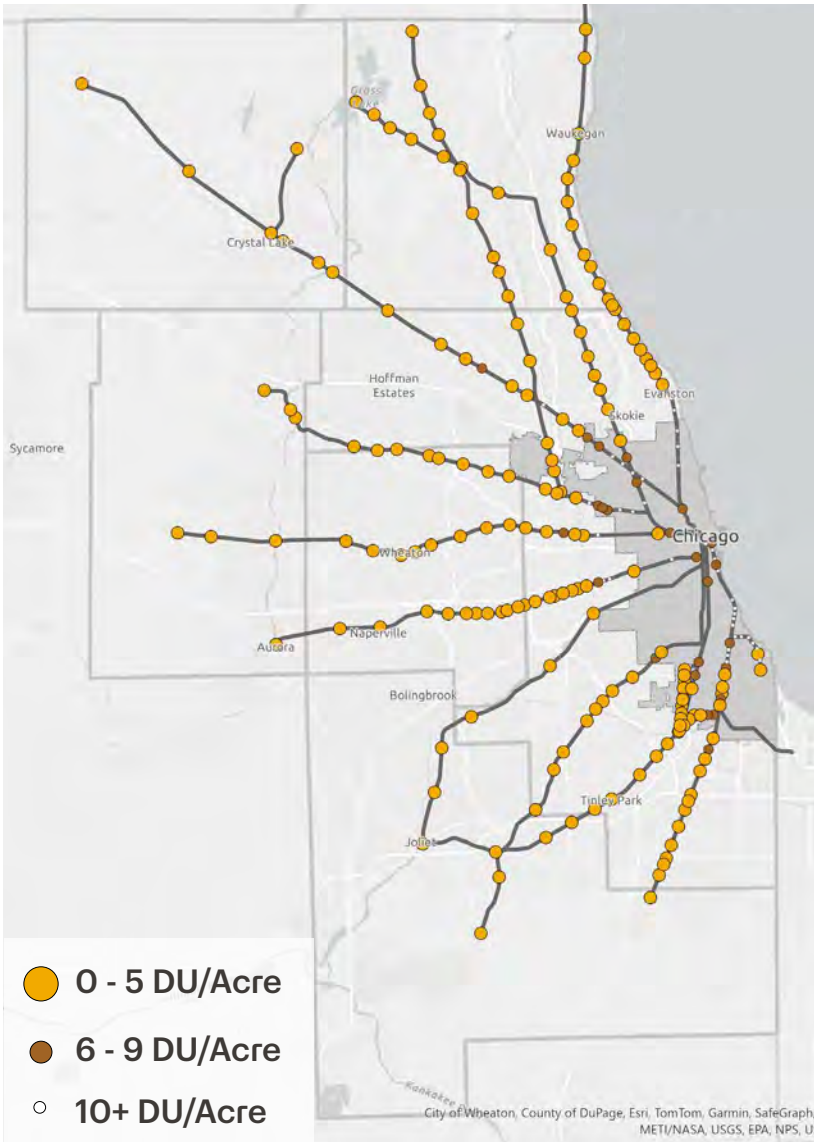
Suburban Areas:

- The average density levels around suburban rail stations (primarily Metra) is 2.9 DU/acre, significantly below the standard of 10 or more DU/acre to support fixed rail service. As shown in Figure 4.3, most suburban areas have fewer than 5 DU/acre within a ¼ mile of their rail station.
- While there has been progress through individual TOD projects in suburban areas, there is still significant room for new residential units near transit based on the density thresholds recommended in this guide.

Potential for Growth:

- Based on this analysis, **promoting ETOD around rail stations could yield more than 250,000 additional residential units** with excellent transit access across the region, simply by meeting minimum recommended density levels.
- Meeting these density thresholds does not require high-rise development. A mix of townhomes, duplexes, and small multi-family buildings can collectively achieve optimal densities, as shown in Figure 4.1: Land Use Densities and Transit Services Comparisons and in the Design Prototypes in Chapter 2.
- Infill development reduces infrastructure costs (by building where infrastructure is already in place) and supports the local tax base by adding residents who can support retail, restaurants, and other services.
- Development near transit is typically more walkable and allows households to live closer to amenities and local businesses.
- Adding more housing units also provides an opportunity to fill the gap in affordable housing in the region.

Figure 4.3 Metra 1/4 Mile Station Area Dwelling Units (DU) Per Acre



5. Equity & Engagement

EQUITY FRAMEWORK

The Chicago region is home to more than 8 million residents that represent a diverse mix of races, ethnicities, ages, and abilities. But not all people in the region have equitable access to opportunity, including in our transportation system.

Equitable approaches to land use planning and ETOD are particularly critical to historically disadvantaged groups, such as communities of color and indigenous people, people with disabilities, and older adults. These groups are most commonly impacted by gentrification and displacement that may occur when a neighborhood or area experiences significant improvements associated with new development and investment. By taking an approach to planning that leads with equity, ETOD projects have the capacity to elevate the community's collective voice in the decision-making process and focus on community benefits relating to neighborhood spaces, businesses, jobs, housing, community identity, safe access, multimodal mobility, public health, arts and culture, and environmental justice.

Example of an "e zine" developed by Palenque LSNA youth as part of an ETOD Plan

Image Credit: Logan Square Blue Line Equitable Transit-Oriented Development Plan, Elevated Chicago, CMAP and Palenque LSNA

ETOD in Disadvantaged Communities

ETOD is sensitive to the impact of decades of disinvestment in some areas, working to change the narrative around a community's longstanding network of amenities and preserve the positive contributions of long-time residents that made the community what it is today. The generations of residents and businesses who added their personal stories, memories, and other contributions to the character of the community should reserve the capacity to stay and enjoy the improvements and enhanced quality of life that often come with building up development around transit. If equity is centered and existing communities are included in land use decisions, gentrification and displacement do not have to be foregone conclusions.

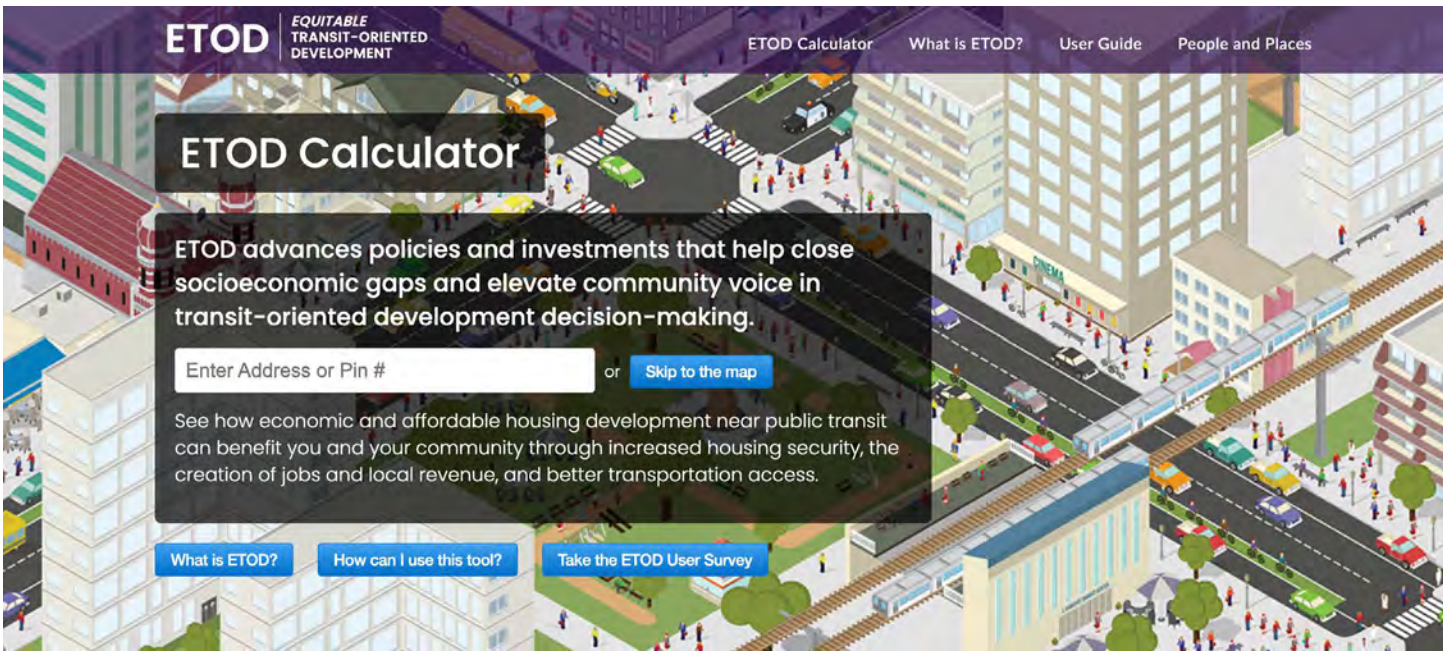
ETOD in Low-Need Communities

ETOD is just as important in areas with high resources and lower need. This means that opportunities for affordable housing, access to jobs and amenities are still needed, especially near existing transit in these areas. This may require updates to zoning codes, making the approval process more predictable to allow for these types of uses and possibly the use of incentives to mitigate higher costs of land. Community engagement and education are critical elements to support changes in land use to provide these opportunities.

ETOD & Accessibility

ETOD also enables people of all abilities and ages to safely and conveniently navigate the neighborhood to access transit, businesses, services, and other opportunities. For people with disabilities, this goes beyond being ADA compliant with right-of-way and streetscape infrastructure. It also includes making choices about how to construct and maintain the built environment so that they don't become hindrances as infrastructure ages and go through wear and tear (e.g., brick pavers add to the ambiance of streetscape design but can form uneven surfaces over time that become hazardous to people with disabilities).

The ETOD Calculator is a free tool that anyone can use to explore the relationship between a potential building design and the impacts it could have on the surrounding community. It provides information on demographic trends, community impacts, and transit benefits for any parcel in Cook County. The Calculator is a project by Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) and the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC).



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Developing an understanding of and support for ETOD varies from community to community. Some communities welcome the introduction of new development around transit to boost ridership, add to the housing stock, encourage economic development, and revitalize a corridor or district. However, other communities take varying levels of communicating the benefits of ETOD while balancing concerns ranging from density, parking, and building heights to gentrification, displacement, and general fear of change. A list of best practices and lessons learned in communications, education, and community engagement around ETOD is provided here (this list is representative only and not exhaustive of all potential options).

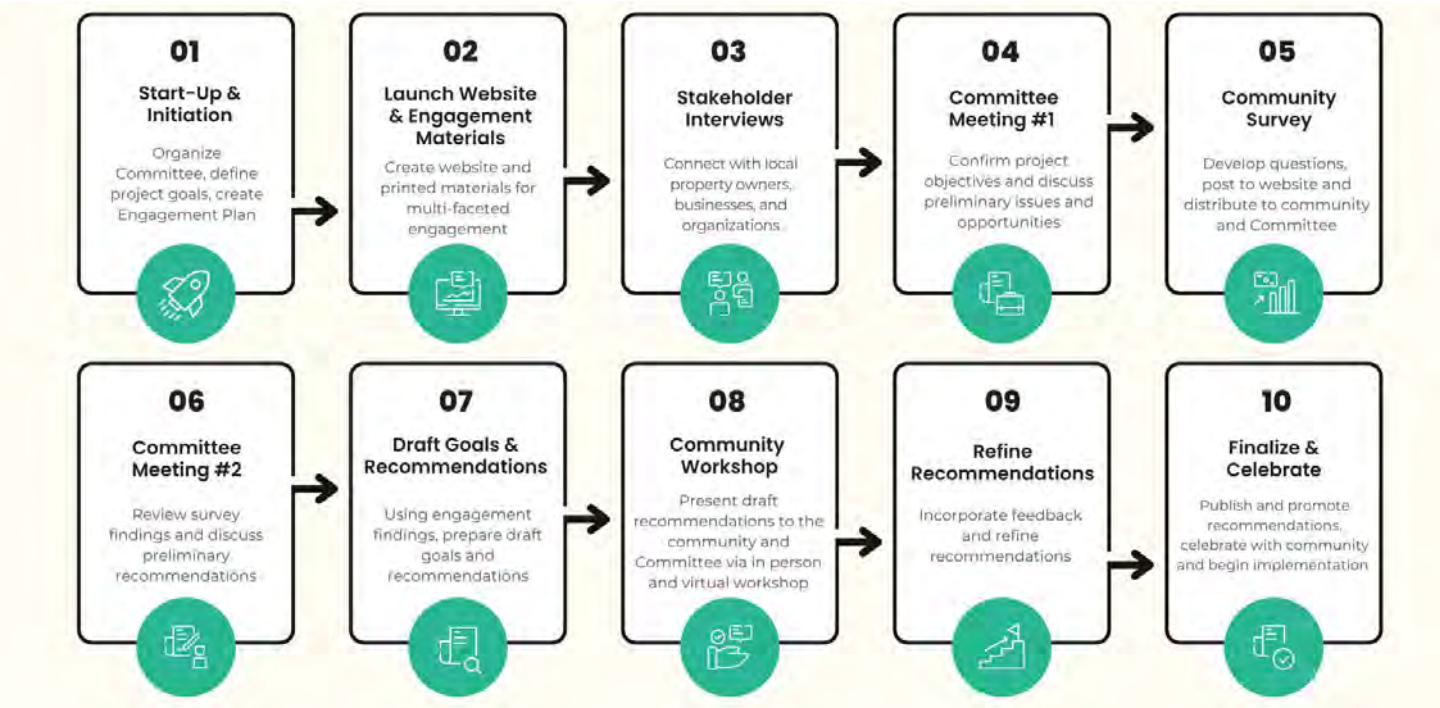
Developing a community engagement plan:

The first step is to tailor an engagement plan for the specific community, building on its unique strengths, organizations, and institutions. Best practices include developing a range of tools that meet people where they are. This may include informal outreach to more formal meetings to online engagement tools. For outreach to be effective, the process must be transparent, well documented, and must start engagement early on, before any decisions have been made.

Example of a community engagement plan that provides clear and meaningful steps for input at each stage of the process ▼

Forming a committee:

Two (or more) heads are better than one. This is particularly true for raising awareness and building support for topics like ETOD. Formation of a steering committee, task force, or working group is an effective way to convene a group of people with varying perspectives and needs to discuss commonalities that can lead to agreements on collective goals and expectations for an ETOD project or approach. By bringing together people representing different segments of the community, group members are able to bring ideas and proposals to their respective constituencies to build up awareness and support in smaller increments that contribute towards the larger whole.



Meeting people where they are at:
It is important to bring your message straight to the people in settings in which they are comfortable, like at a school, church, homeowners association, or even a an event like a farmers market. One place where people are at almost constantly is online, usually on their phone at home, school, work, bus, train, or wherever. Tried and true in-person meetings with people are still effective, but web-based engagement continues to prove to be just as effective, particularly engaging hard-to-reach people like marginalized communities, youth, and immigrants with a range of documentation status.

Meeting one-on-one:
Different community stakeholders have different ideas and concerns when ETOD is proposed for their neighborhood or district. While a public meeting is the traditional way to engage the broader community, a concerted effort to meet one-on-one with individual business groups, organizations, and other constituencies is an effective way to listen and respond to their specific needs.

Compensate for time and input:
When possible, providing compensation for those who share time and input is a tangible way to show they are valued, whether through cash or gift card, food, and/or travel reimbursement.

Putting it in writing:
It's one thing to raise awareness of the principles and benefits of ETOD. It's a completely other thing to reach agreement with the community on how ETOD projects will benefit the public good and memorialize those agreements in official documentation.

Building support with data:
Organizations such as Elevated Chicago, Metropolitan Planning Council and Center for Neighborhood Technology collaborate with local governments, transit agencies, colleges and universities, healthcare institutions, and philanthropic organizations to research and summarize key data points and metrics that can be incorporated in communication materials to quantify the beneficial impacts of ETOD. Data is even more critical from an equity standpoint to find solutions that resolve issues like redlining, public health risks, environmental justice, and displacement due to gentrification.

Elevating underrepresented voices:
As St. Paul, MN, was planning its new light rail line, community organizations and equity advocates banded together to lead community engagement efforts to ensure the transit line included stops serving low-income neighborhoods. By elevating these historically marginalized voices, they were able to advocate for other important issues like affordable housing, small businesses, and employment access. See more details in the Case Studies chapter of this document.

Pop-ups take place at existing community events, so that engagement is convenient and easy for participants ▼

Empowering youth leaders:
As part of the process to develop the Logan Square Blue Line ETOD Action Plan, Palenque LSNA engaged its youth leaders, which included high school and college students, by inviting them to be active participants in brainstorming ideas, presenting solutions, and guiding early action implementation projects. Palenque LSNA has a rich history of building up the capacity of local parents and youth to be involved in issue advocacy and community improvement efforts.

Creating a toolkit:
One way to communicate the benefits of ETOD projects and general ETOD principles is to empower others to spread the word among their own communities. Great Communities Collaborative in the San Francisco Bay Area developed a toolkit for ETOD advocates to take out into their own communities to build support for station area planning and proposed projects. The success of this toolkit has inspired other regions to adapt their own. Chicago published its ETOD Policy Plan in 2020, establishing equity as a guiding framework for ETOD initiatives moving forward.[1]

Communicating through art:
Cities with vibrant artist communities often utilize their creativity to communicate messages, build support, and encourage advocacy for a variety of issues like housing, economic disparities, public health, and safety. Many, if not all, of these issues relate to ETOD, so there is a strong case to include the arts as a means of communicating about ETOD and its impacts. The robust artist community in Los Angeles is renowned for this type of expression. WonderRoot in Atlanta and Palenque LSNA in Chicago also utilize the arts to reinforce cultural identity around train stations.

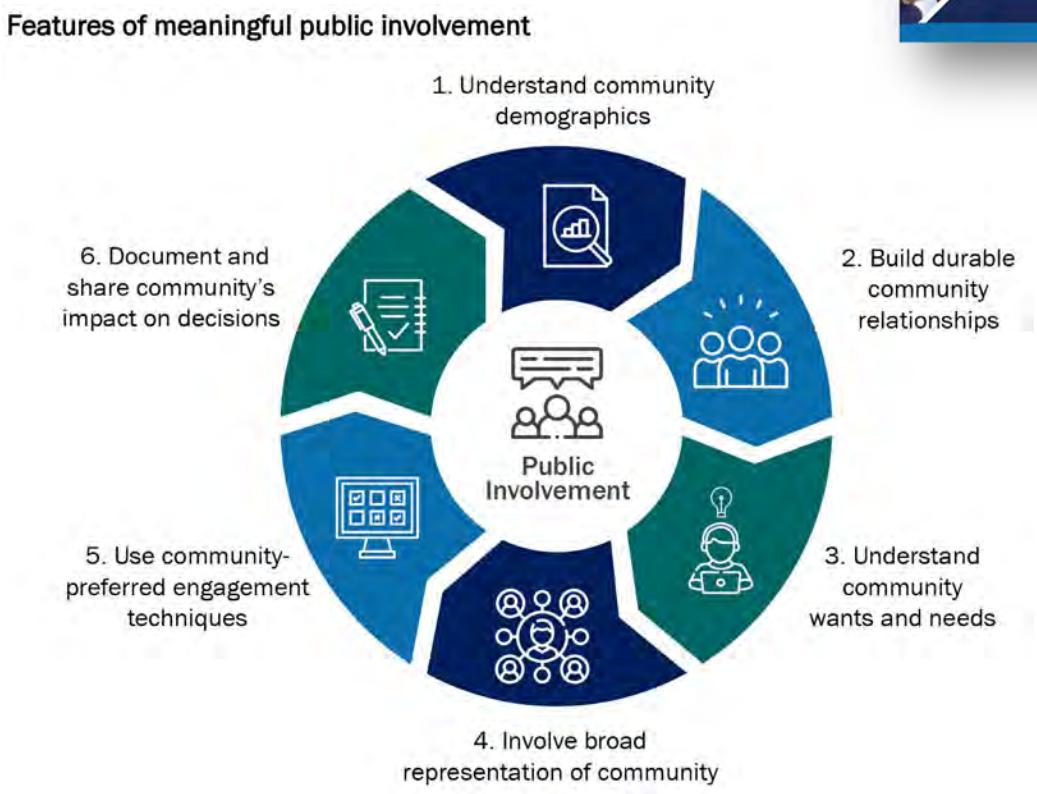
Community meetings should be held in spaces that are comfortable and convenient for youth, like schools or recreation centers ▼

Planning with (not for) people:
Elevated Chicago produced the second version of its *Community Engagement Principles and Recommendations* document, which describes a series of principles to guide the engagement of residents, stakeholders, and organizations in an equitable manner that centers people and their experiences, not just the physical and economic outcomes of development around transit.[2] Starting out with specifically defining who the "community" is and building trust (or rebuilding it, in some cases), the community engagement principles are intended to actively involve people throughout the planning process, provide for reciprocal communication and learning, center empathy, elevate cultural competency, value local knowledge and capital, embrace multiple perspectives, build up local leadership and advocacy, foster ownership, and celebrate identity. The end goal is a more people-centric process and ETOD that genuinely integrates the human experience and honors diversity in all its forms.

One of the eight core community engagement principles defined by Elevated Chicago to center equity and plan with (not for) people. ▼

Being intentional with outreach:
Community engagement is a critical piece to any planning process. However, the outcomes need to be meaningful to adequately inform goals, strategies, and development concepts that reflect the ideas, concerns, and expectations of the community. The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) put together a guide titled *Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making*, which summarizes best practices for equitable public involvement that ensures inclusion of underserved and overburdened populations in the planning process.[3] The USDOT's guide describes critical gaps in the engagement process, the importance of capacity building, metrics for successful strategies, criteria for selecting appropriate outreach methods, and an appendix full of close to three dozen engagement techniques. While the guide is specifically targeted to USDOT funding recipients, the recommendations can be adapted to ETOD processes.

Infographic of key features of meaningful public involvement ▼



6. Transportation & Land Use Policies

Making communities more transit-friendly begins with decision-making at the local level. Local government leaders can define land use and transportation policies that get implemented through infrastructure improvements and private development, project by project. Over time, communities can create built environments that are not only transit-friendly but also promote equitable economic development, public health, environmental sustainability, and an enhanced quality of life. Transit-friendly design promotes walkable neighborhoods; multi-modal connections between housing, jobs, and other destinations; active and inviting streetscapes; and a variety of housing options. Municipalities can see the economic benefits from higher land values near transit and stronger tax bases with active, walkable business districts.

Through engagement conducted for this guide, leaders across the region (representatives from transportation agencies, developers, municipal planners, and nonprofit and community based organizations) shared input on key challenges and opportunities relating to transit-friendly communities. This chapter responds to this feedback and provides solutions to those who will ultimately be implementing these policies, programs, and investments.

The following pages provide a toolkit of land use and transportation strategies and best practices that communities can use across a variety of topic areas:

- Land Use Planning
- Site Design
- Housing Opportunities Near Transit
- Affordable Housing
- Missing Middle Housing
- Zoning & Planned Development
- Active Transportation Planning
- First & Last Mile Connections
- Transit-Friendly Parking Standards
- Redevelopment of Parking Lots
- Transportation Demand Management

Think of the strategies as a menu of options to guide planners, policymakers, and community leaders in crafting policies that support transit-friendly places. While not all strategies will be appropriate or feasible in every area of the region, this chapter can be a starting point for assessing current policies and identifying opportunities for improvement.

Note that while the strategies are organized into different sections, many are interrelated and apply across multiple topics. For example: transit friendly site design also includes right-sizing parking requirements, pedestrian access is enhanced when buildings face the sidewalk rather than a parking lot, and a predictable development review process is enhanced by clear design guidelines.

By using these strategies, communities can strengthen the three D's of transit supportive land use and ensure the region's land use and transportation systems support each other to form a complete regional network:

1. **Design**: Utilize design principles to make it easy for people to take transit
2. **Density**: By locating sufficient housing and jobs near transit, it is more feasible for people to use transit
3. **Diversification**: A mix of housing, retail, and employment makes transit more accessible for all users.

Land Use Planning

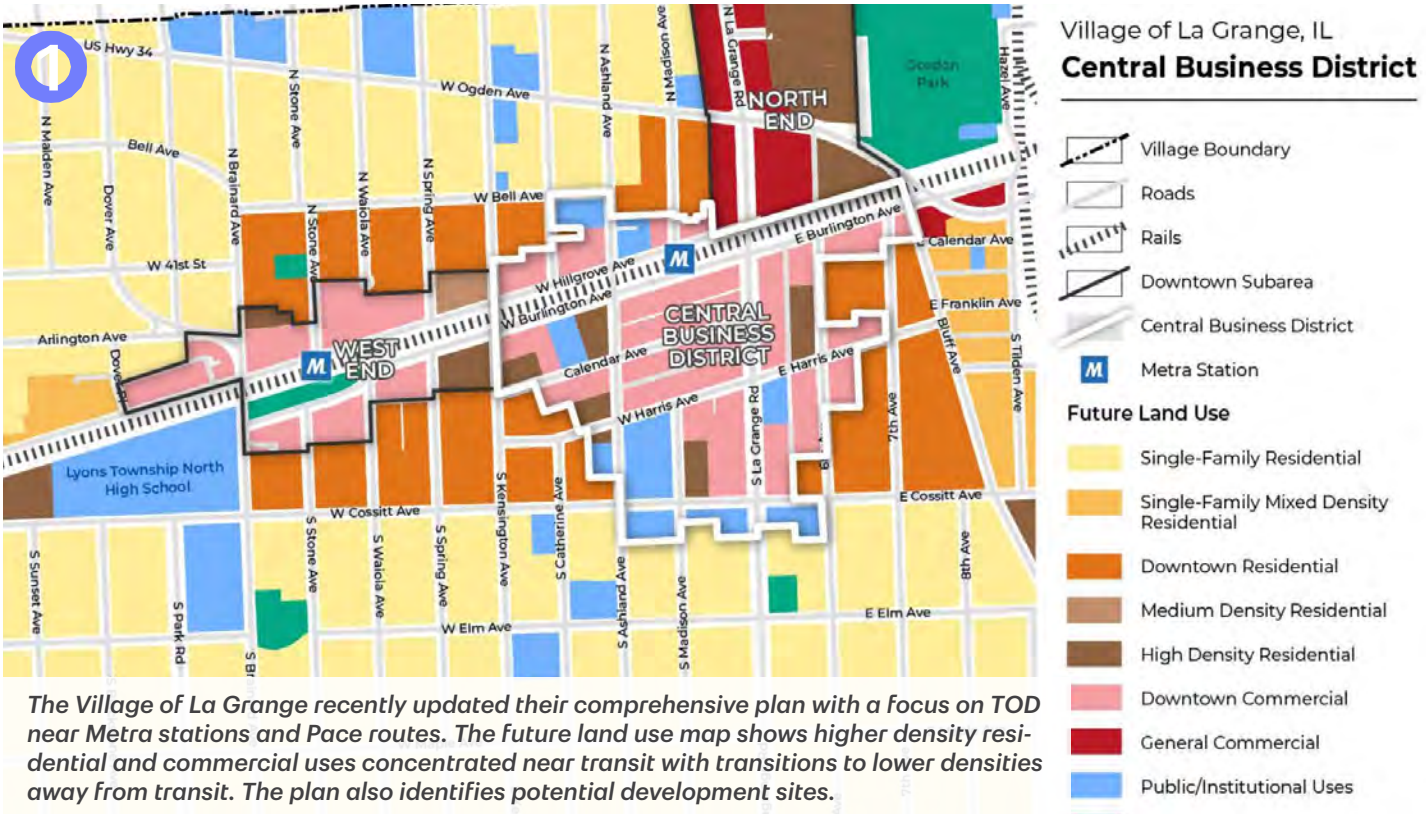
Communities conduct local planning to define policies related to land use, development, zoning, and improvements that make places more sustainable, equitable, walkable, and transit-friendly. This section describes strategies to consider for land use planning with transit as a guiding framework for new development or redevelopment.

STRATEGY 1: Future Land Use Planning

- Ensure that local comprehensive plans, corridor plans, and special area plans are up to date and align with the community's current vision and goals.
- Use the transit network as a foundation and framework for short- and long-term growth and development.
- Plan for enhancing access to transit via first- and last-mile pedestrian and bike connections and access infrastructure.
- Concentrate nodes of activity (commercial retail, service uses, and offices) and population density (housing) around transit.
- Define expected outcomes, such as increases in the local sales and real estate tax base, and then measure results.

STRATEGY 2: Priorities for Development

- Encourage infill development, adaptive reuse, and other redevelopment opportunities on vacant/underutilized properties.
- Consider business retention policies and programs to retain employers and businesses near transit.
- Recruit development opportunities that will attract new residents, businesses, jobs, and destinations that can support and contribute to transit ridership.



The Village of La Grange recently updated their comprehensive plan with a focus on TOD near Metra stations and Pace routes. The future land use map shows higher density residential and commercial uses concentrated near transit with transitions to lower densities away from transit. The plan also identifies potential development sites.

Land Use Planning

STRATEGY 3: Capital Planning

- Develop a capital improvements plan that details needed right-of-way improvements, sidewalks, trail connections, bike facilities, and other access infrastructure.
- Work with roadway jurisdictions on improvement projects to ensure bicycle, pedestrian, and transit accommodations are considered.
- Budget for and seek grants for capital projects that can support access to transit, such as sidewalk construction/maintenance, intersection and crosswalk improvements, and bike facilities. Funding sources include RTA and CMAP at the local level, and a variety of grant programs at the state and federal levels.
- To the extent feasible, conduct preliminary Phase 1 engineering to make projects more competitive to receive grants.

STRATEGY 4: Transit-Friendly Policies

- Ensure that the local zoning code allows for both vertical (residential over commercial) and horizontal (residential adjacent to commercial) mixed use developments.
- Permit vertical mixed use in core business districts and within a quarter mile of transit. Expand allowable ground floor uses to include business services, office, and other active uses.
- Permit horizontal mixed-use and/or ground floor residential in areas that are outside a quarter mile from transit.
- Allow higher density multi-family residential in areas within a ten-minute walk (half-mile) from transit, gradually transitioning to lower-density multi-family and single-family residential farther from transit.
- Update parking standards (see Transit-Friendly Parking Standards on page 76-78).

A four-story mixed use development was recently approved in La Grange, to be located within a 4-minute walk of the Stone Ave. Metra Station. The project was supported by the Village's planning efforts which called for revitalization of the area near the Metra station and for the creation of new housing and activity generators.

Site Design

The design of any given site and the buildings and features located on it significantly contribute to the look and feel of a street and neighborhood. Individual sites can collectively advance transit-friendly design when they are pedestrian-oriented, responsive to environmental resources and topography, connected to the surrounding context and wider community, and visually appealing. Best practices include the following strategies.

STRATEGY 1: Building Setbacks

- Reduce building setbacks to locate buildings closer to sidewalks, creating a sense of place and a pleasant pedestrian environment
- Depending on neighborhood context, setbacks between zero and ten feet will create a more walkable environment.
- Create a consistent streetwall with buildings facing the street.
- Provide space for walkways between buildings.
- Connect side or rear parking areas with sidewalks to the front entrance.
- Design upper stories to step back from the street to lessen the impact of taller buildings.

STRATEGY 2: Building Orientation & Site Layout

- Primary building entrances should be directly accessible from the sidewalk and visible from the street with minimal setbacks.
- Curb cuts to the roadway are eliminated or minimized, limiting interactions between vehicles and pedestrians.

STRATEGY 3: Natural Resources & Green Infrastructure

- Utilize Best Management Practices (BMPs) for natural stormwater management and to enhance the pedestrian environment.
- Utilize green infrastructure like native plantings, natural berms, detention ponds, rain gardens, bioswales, and permeable materials for paved areas.

STRATEGY 4: Parking Location

- Provide parking at the side and/or rear of the site to preserve the street frontage for the pedestrian experience.
- "Teaser" parking can be provided to ensure some parking is visible from the roadway.
- Provide trees and landscaping in parking areas to reduce impervious surfaces, offer shade relief, and screen parked cars.

Buildings that are closer to the sidewalk (zero or minimal setback) enhance the pedestrian experience.

The building entrance is prominently featured and connects with the corner, street, and sidewalk.

Permeable pavers and native plants enhance the pedestrian experience and manage stormwater.

Site Design

STRATEGY 5: Pedestrian-Oriented Streetscapes

- Provide signage scaled for those using sidewalks or bike paths that contribute to street character and help provide wayfinding information.
- Encourage 360 degree architecture and visual appeal on all sides of a building, discouraging blank facades.
- Provide landscaping at building foundations to screen utility features and break up facades.
- Utilize parkway trees, shrubs, and landscaping along the street to provide a buffer between pedestrian paths and the roadway, screen vehicular traffic, offer shade relief, and improve sense of place.
- Provide exterior lighting to help illuminate sidewalks and outdoor spaces at night.
- Integrate outdoor amenities like plazas, patios, and community greens that provide amenities for public use, accessible from public sidewalks (may include public art, fountains, landscaping, or outdoor seating).
- Apply pedestrian streetscape strategies to big box stores and shopping centers as well, to facilitate better access for transit users coming from bus stops that may be far from building entrances.

Public art, seating, landscaping, and decorative lighting contribute to a streetscape that is vibrant, inviting, and comfortable for all users.

The front setback can be used for outdoor dining, awnings, signage, and landscaping to create an inviting and attractive streetscape.

Site Design

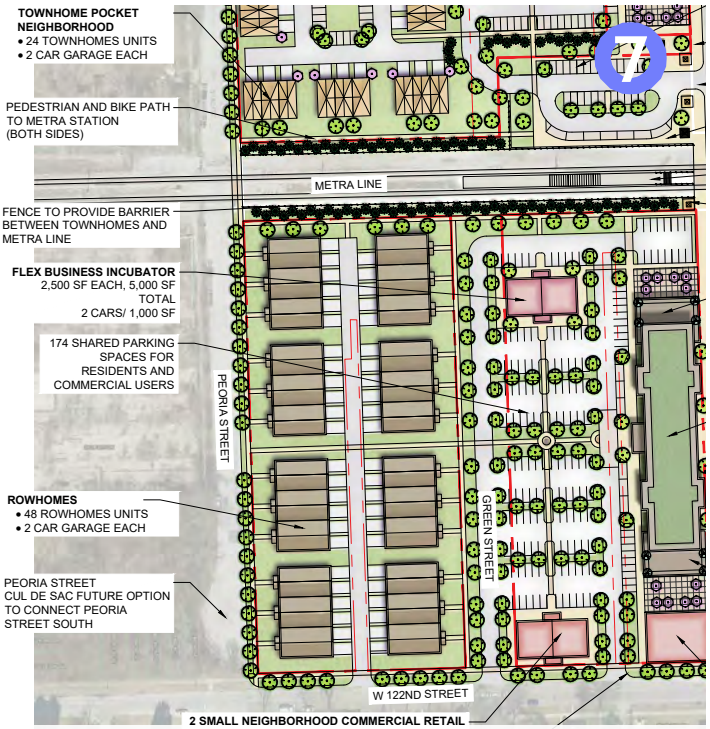
STRATEGY 6: Pedestrian/Bike Connectivity

- Ensure sites provide sidewalks, bike facilities and paths that allow for pedestrian access from the street and parking areas, and connect to residential neighborhoods.
- Install bicycle parking in visible, well-lit areas close to building entrances. Prioritize covered or secure indoor bike storage (i.e. bike rooms or bike parking pods, particularly in parking structures near transit) for added protection.
- Provide paths to allow for cross-access between sites.
- Review bike parking design guidelines to accommodate e-bikes and e-scooters as well.

STRATEGY 7: Site Plan Review

- Prior to submitting site plans, include transit agencies, local government officials, community members, and developers in the discussion to evaluate existing conditions, and review relevant regulations and site design specifications.
- Utilize resources such as Pace *Transit-Supportive Guidelines* to inform site design.
- Ensure development proposals meet local design standards and match long-term plans.
- Determine if new development can be served by existing transit and/or provide additional demand to increase transit service.
- Provide a predictable development review process for developers to navigate in a timely manner with clear guidelines and standards.

Distinct pavement makes a pedestrian crossing through a parking lot more visible and safer.



Site plans should clearly define how proposed development will relate to and connect with transit

Site Design

STRATEGY 8: ADA Accessibility

- Reference the latest American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessibility Standards.
- Ensure that there is a direct, accessible path to ADA accessible parking spaces and transit stops.
- Ensure all paths provide sufficient widths for wheelchairs and install curb ramps containing detectable warnings (e.g. textured surfaces) wherever an accessible route crosses a curb.
- Incorporate clear, accessible signage and wayfinding tools and use visual, tactile, and auditory cues to assist individuals with disabilities in navigating the site.
- When designing outdoor spaces, ensure that furniture, dining areas, and planters do not prevent ADA accessible routes.
- Develop an ADA Transition Plan with a particular focus on transportation (while also addressing community-wide accessibility improvements). CMAP can offer technical assistance and resource-sharing to assist with the process of improving accessibility.

ADA accessibility is enhanced with sustainable design, such as pervious pavers and native plantings.

Clear pathways should be provided to parking areas and transit stops.

Housing Opportunities Near Transit

Housing plays a crucial role in creating transit-friendly communities. Greater-density housing supports frequent and reliable transit service, while diverse and accessible housing types ensure that all community members can benefit from a variety of housing options and minimize displacement of residents. Community engagement that supports new housing and transit friendly design is key to successful implementation.

STRATEGY 1: Proximity and Accessibility

- Develop and cluster higher-density housing and mixed-use projects within a 10-minute (0.5 mile) walk of train stations and high-frequency bus routes.
- Locate housing near retail, parks, community services, schools, and employment centers.
- Plan smaller clusters of medium-density housing and mixed-use projects in between transit stations and along bus routes.
- Provide safe, well-lit, accessible, and direct pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists between residences, transit stations and other amenities.

STRATEGY 2: Community and Open Space

- Minimize setbacks in commercial districts near transit, but provide adequate room for outdoor seating, dining and landscaping in strategic locations.
- Create community spaces within housing developments such as courtyards, gardens, plazas, and rooftop terraces to encourage social interaction and reinforce a sense of community.

STRATEGY 3: Architectural Design

- Develop design guidelines to ensure well-designed and transit-friendly development.
- Design buildings to be aesthetically pleasing and compatible with the surrounding context.
- Ensure practical layouts, efficient space, and comfortable interiors for residents and tenants.

Example of a mixed-use suburban TOD

An articulated facade enhances the built environment

Outdoor dining and lighting foster social gathering

Example of a townhome development

Housing Opportunities Near Transit

STRATEGY 4: Housing Types

- Allow for a higher intensity of use near transit. This may range from multi-story and mixed-use buildings in core areas of business districts to townhomes, duplexes, and small apartment buildings in walking distance to transit.
- Provide a variety of housing options dispersed throughout the community while maintaining a compact, walkable environment. This may include both rental and for-sale choices for different household needs and price-points.

STRATEGY 5: Land Use and Zoning

- Amend and update zoning text and maps in areas served by transit to allow for high-density residential and mixed-use developments.
- Accommodate multi-family and mixed-use developments near transit "by right" without requiring zoning changes.
- Implement zoning flexibility to allow for creative housing solutions such as live-work units, co-living, and accessory dwelling units in appropriate zoning districts.

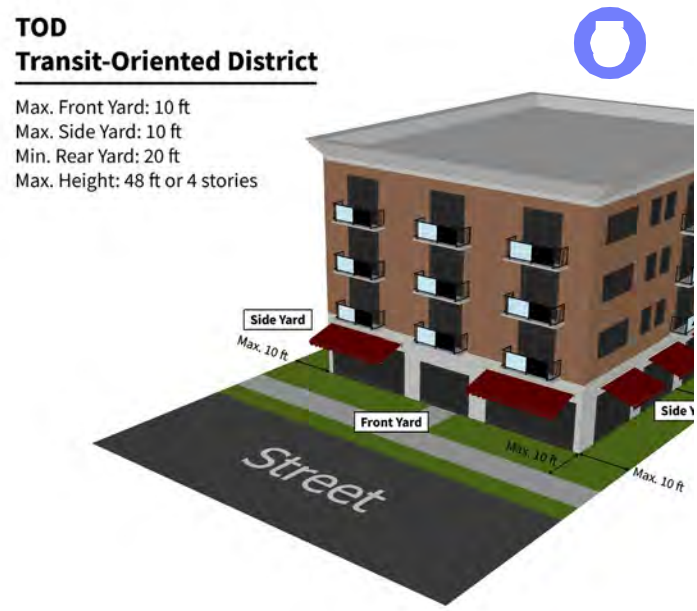
STRATEGY 6: Financial Incentives

- Consider establishing local funding sources or incentives that can support development that meets community goals.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a tool municipalities can use to support site preparation, demolition or rehabilitation of buildings, land acquisition, sidewalk and curb replacement, streetscape improvements, and other infrastructure projects.
- Special Service Areas (SSAs) or Business Districts can be used to create a dedicated funding source to support new services and redevelopment in commercial areas.

STRATEGY 7: Partnerships

- Form public-private partnerships to support developments that bring a range of housing types and vitality to the community.
- Acquire land and/or sell property at reduced cost to developers.
- Work with private owners to market properties to attract new development and/or tenants.
- Seek joint development opportunities between municipalities and transit agencies.

A mixed-use TOD with condo units above retail



Zoning updates can be made to accommodate ETOD by-right that does not require rezoning or variations

Affordable Housing

The need for affordable housing is growing while building affordable housing has become more challenging as the cost of land, construction and financing have all increased. Promoting affordable units near transit provides more options for households, while also reducing housing and transportation costs. "Affordable" is defined as housing expenses that are no more than 30% of household income. Communities can consider the strategies below to advance affordable housing goals.

STRATEGY 1: Identify Sites

- Identify privately and publicly owned sites for affordable and mixed-income housing, which may include vacant land and buildings or outdated structures.
- Promote and facilitate infill development of affordable housing on sites that are walkable to transit and other amenities, rather than on sites that are less accessible and far from neighborhood services and transit.

STRATEGY 2: Land Acquisition

- Consider providing publicly owned land to developers at no or low cost in exchange for affordable housing as a public benefit.
- Work with a community land bank to acquire vacant, abandoned, and tax foreclosed properties for rehab or new affordable housing.
- Coordinate with transit agencies that may be able to sell or transfer excess property for new development.

STRATEGY 3: Contextual Design

- Promote high-quality design for affordable housing and mixed-income housing that responds to the context of the site and enhances the environment, walkability, and accessibility of housing units.

STRATEGY 4: Materials and Construction

- Ensure that zoning and building codes do not artificially raise the cost of construction and costs for maintaining housing.
- Update codes to allow for manufactured and modular housing that can be built at lower costs.
- Promote the use of sustainable materials and green building design and practices to reduce ongoing costs for residents and energy consumption.

The design of affordable housing should be cohesive with existing neighborhood contexts

Affordable Housing

STRATEGY 5: Housing Plan

- Develop a housing plan addressing the need for affordable housing in your community. (The Illinois Affordable Housing Appeals Act (P.A. 103-0487) requires communities having less than 10% of their housing defined as affordable to prepare a housing plan to promote more affordable units in their community.)

STRATEGY 6: Identify and Address Barriers

- Assess building permit and land entitlement processes to identify gaps, obstacles, and opportunities for new affordable units.
- Create a streamlined approval process for affordable and mixed-income developments.

STRATEGY 7: Inclusionary Zoning

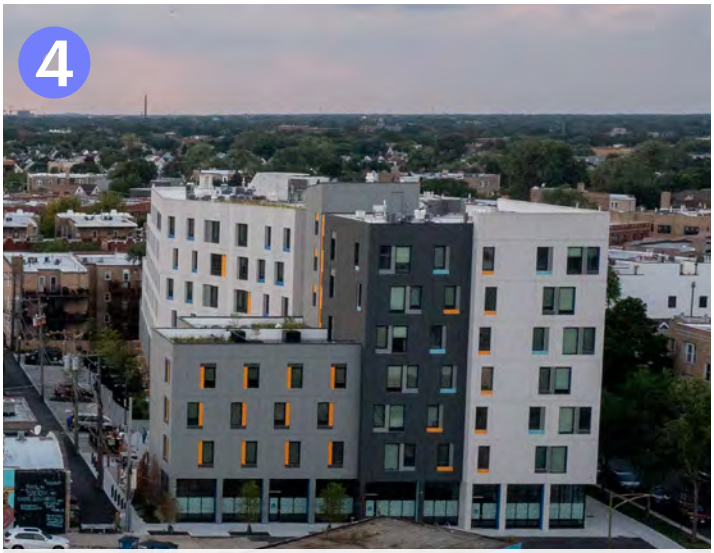
- Consider inclusionary zoning policies that would require a certain percentage of units in new housing developments to be affordable. Inclusionary policies may require a portion of set aside units to be on-site versus funding off-site affordable units.

STRATEGY 8: Financing

- Provide financial incentives for new affordable housing developments or preservation of existing affordable housing near transit.
- Facilitate pre-development capital to support affordable developments that can be a significant barrier to development.
- Consider funding sources such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF), municipal bonds, land transfer, or reducing the cost of land.
- Consider providing funding to community development corporations and affordable housing developers.

STRATEGY 9: Community Land Trusts

- Collaborate with community land trusts and land banks to acquire and manage properties near transit for the purpose of developing affordable housing projects. A community land trust would own the land and/or housing unit and be able to ensure that the unit stays affordable over time.



Example of a sustainable ETOD in Logan Square, the Lucy Gonzalez Parsons Apartments

Native and low-maintenance plants are not only sustainable but also cost-effective to maintain

Missing Middle Housing

The "Missing Middle" describes a range of housing options that can blend in with neighborhoods which have historically been only single-family detached housing. Townhomes, duplexes, and other "house scale" designs can provide additional housing options in residential areas close to transit.

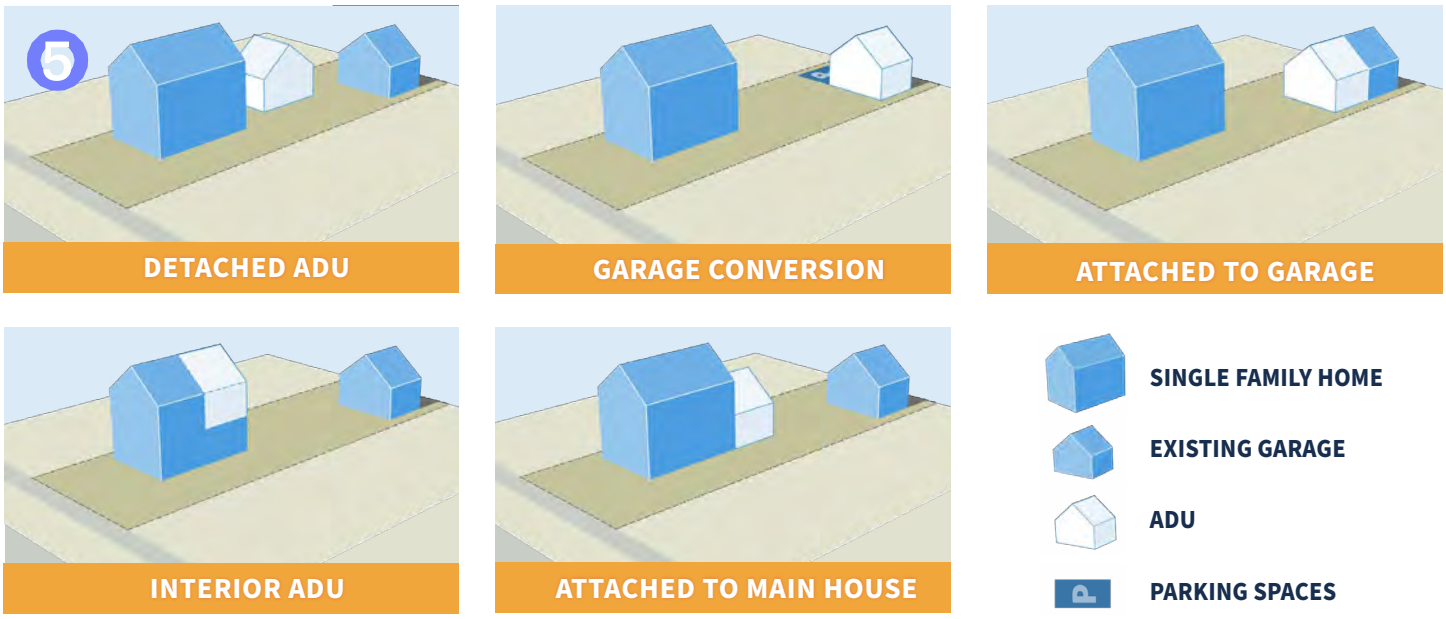
STRATEGY 1: Community Engagement
- Engage with and educate the community about opportunities for new housing types.
- Provide examples and arrange a tour of missing middle housing in nearby peer communities.

STRATEGY 2: Assess Housing Needs
- Assess the availability and variety of existing housing stock.
- Research demographic changes in the community such as changes in household size, household age, and family composition.
- Determine any mismatches between available units and housing attainability.

STRATEGY 3: Identify Potential Areas
- Identify areas of the community near transit that are "transitional," between commercial and single-family detached neighborhoods.
- Consider excess commercial and office sites near transit to redevelop for residential uses.

STRATEGY 4: Foster Compatible Design
- Explore residential designs that complement existing housing stock.
- Building placement on the property and front, side, and rear setbacks should be sensitive to neighboring properties.

STRATEGY 5: Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
- Allow ADUs on single-family lots either through the legal conversion of an existing portion of a home (such as an attic), an addition to the primary structure, or a new detached unit on the same lot.
- ADUs may be permitted or conditional uses in lower-density residential districts.



Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) come in many different forms and provide different methods to add housing units in lower-density, traditionally single-family areas.

Missing Middle Housing

STRATEGY 6: Design Guidelines
- Prepare design guidelines to ensure that new housing developments are of high-quality and will enhance the community.
- Design guidelines typically cover topics such as site design, building materials, relationship to the street, porches, windows, roof lines, and parking placement.

STRATEGY 7: Review Codes and Ordinances
- Consider zoning code updates to allow additional units in single-family zones such as ADUs and duplexes or consider eliminating exclusively single-family zones.
- Ensure there are adequate areas zoned for duplexes, quads, townhomes, and small apartment buildings.

STRATEGY 8: Parking
- Reduce off-street parking requirements to allow for small-scale and infill development and redevelopment.

STRATEGY 9: Work With Property Owners and Small Developers
- Conduct outreach and education with property owners and small developers about missing middle housing opportunities.

STRATEGY 10: Affordability
- Investigate ways to make missing middle housing more affordable through financial incentives, density bonuses for affordable units, or land write-downs.

Missing Middle housing types can fit into existing neighborhood contexts.| Missing Middle Housing term created by Daniel Parolek | Image © Opticos Design, Inc. | For more info visit www.missingmiddlehousing.com

Zoning & Planned Development

Zoning and planned development regulations are how a community defines allowable development types, densities, and built forms. To advance transit-friendly development, communities can consider some of the following zoning strategies, or combine several into a broader ETOD Zoning Policy.

STRATEGY 1: Mixed-Use Zoning

- Allow residential uses in commercial and business zoning districts.
- Enable both vertical mixed-use (a combination of different uses within one building, commonly with residential uses above a non-residential ground floor) and horizontal mixed-use (distinct uses on separate parcels combined in one particular area or district).

STRATEGY 2: Multi-Family Housing Near Transit

- Ensure that multi-family residential is a permitted use within close proximity to transit (bus stops and/or rail stations).
- Apply design and architectural treatments to multi-family buildings that can mitigate potential impacts on surrounding uses (such as stepping back upper stories).

STRATEGY 3: Strategic Ground Floor Uses

- Seek to attract development that includes ground floor commercial in inner core business districts or within a quarter mile of transit.
- Allow flexibility in ground floor uses outside of inner core business districts. Commercial-residential vertical mixed use developments can be difficult to finance and may remain vacant if located in an area with low retail demand and limited foot traffic.
- Allow for conversion of outdated commercial spaces into residential units.

STRATEGY 4: ETOD Zoning Incentives

- Consider creating a zoning district or ordinance that requires equitable transit-oriented development, with standards that allow greater height/density and reduced parking requirements in exchange for affordable units and transit-friendly design.

A zoning overlay district is one way to apply ETOD-tailored standards and incentives to increase residential and commercial development opportunities.

Zoning & Planned Development

STRATEGY 5: By-Right vs. Planned Development

- Ensure that desired development in key transit-oriented locations can be built via by-right zoning, using the planned development process only to address unique site issues or forms of development that advance community goals.
- Encourage transit-friendly development using by-right zoning to facilitate a straightforward process that aligns with established community expectations and goals.
- Pursue the planned development process when there is a need for additional flexibility and holistic site plan review.
- Educate elected and appointed officials (i.e. Plan Commissions, Councils) about the planned development process.

STRATEGY 6: Simple & Flexible Zoning

- Ensure that zoning districts' intent and standards are straightforward. Overly complex zoning regulations can be difficult for developers to use.
- Facilitate desired development character through design guidelines which can be in addition to zoning standards.
- Use land use categories, rather than detailed and specific permitted use lists, to allow greater flexibility and encourage economic development.

Midtown Square is next to the Glenview Metra station and was approved through a planned development process that resulted in streetscape enhancements, amenities, reduced parking, and improved site design.

Active Transportation Planning

Walking, cycling, rolling, and scooting—known collectively as active transportation—are essential modes for connecting to and from transit service. The following strategies can help communities strengthen their active transportation networks, a critical piece of a transit-friendly community. These actions may be most impactful when done as part of a cohesive planning process, and documentation of such actions, findings, and needs can help secure grant funding for implementation.

STRATEGY 1: Community Engagement

- Survey community members on current active transportation use and infrastructure comfort.
- Focus especially on areas with higher populations of disabled and elderly residents as well as disadvantaged communities who more often rely on non-vehicle transportation.
- Initiate a committee that meets regularly to advocate for bicycle and pedestrian issues.

STRATEGY 2: Existing Facilities and Gaps

- Inventory all existing sidewalks, trails, and bicycle facilities, and conduct a level of comfort analysis for these facilities.
- Map gaps and deficiencies in existing network, including long distances between crosswalks, barriers such as expressways, low comfort pathways, and circuitous routing.
- Focus especially within a mile of existing transit service.

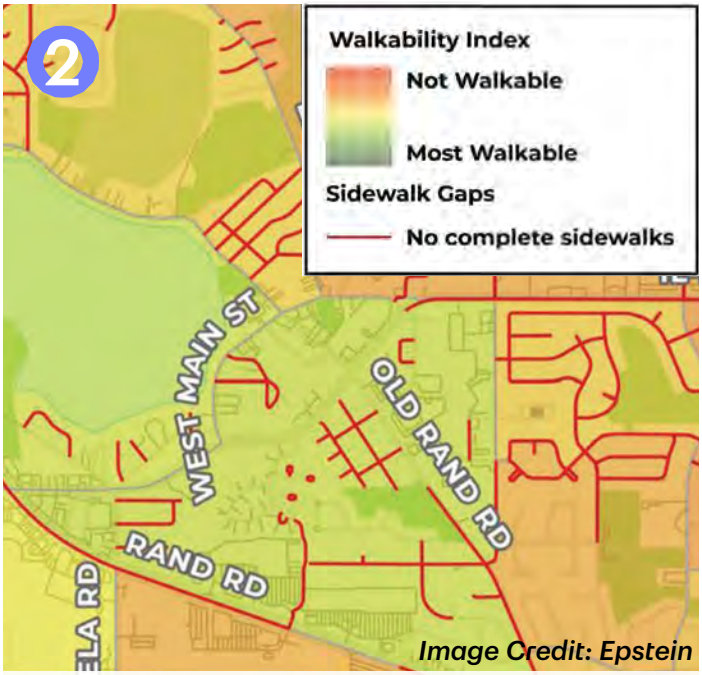
STRATEGY 3: Crash Data

- Map the past 5 years of crash data to identify particularly dangerous areas.
- Isolate and identify pedestrian and bicycle crashes.
- Isolate and identify serious injury and fatal crashes.

STRATEGY 4: Connected Networks

- Develop a plan that establishes a network of safe, connected, comfortable, and convenient pathways for walking and cycling.
- Develop specific recommendations for crossing major corridors and for high-crash areas.

Residents of a community can identify ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety



Mapping existing pedestrian and bike infrastructure and gaps that need to be filled can help secure grant funding

Active Transportation Planning

STRATEGY 5: Design Standards

- Adopt a Complete Streets policy with roadway design standards that help ensure pedestrians and cyclists have safe, comfortable, and connected infrastructure.
- Refer to best practice design guidance from NACTO and AASHTO. State routes are required to follow IDOT's Complete Streets Policy.[1]

STRATEGY 6: Adjacent Jurisdiction Coordination

- Bring adjacent jurisdictions (including Forest Preserves, county, IDOT, and surrounding municipalities) into the Active Transportation Planning process to bridge connections across borders.

STRATEGY 7: Codes and Policies

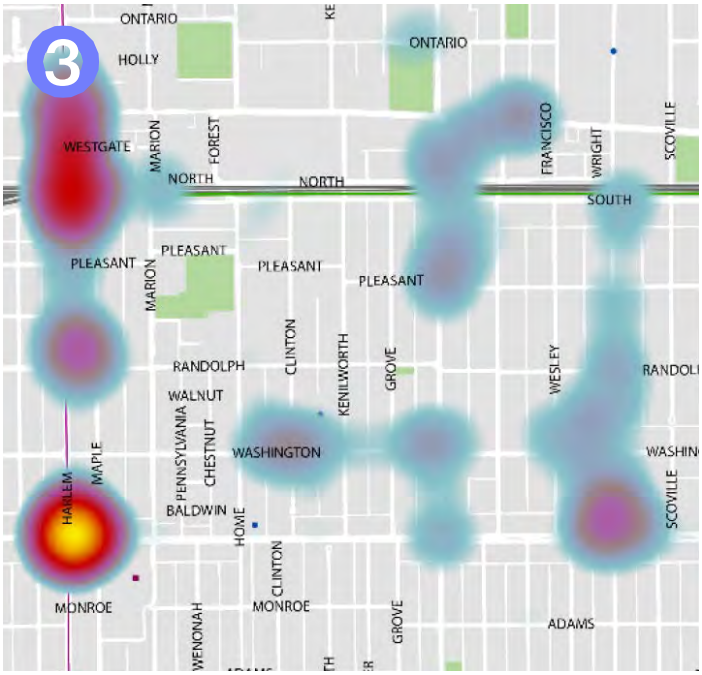
- Update codes and policies to match latest best practices in active transportation planning. Refer to NACTO and AASHTO for guidance.
- Include bike parking requirements and design codes.
- Include Complete Streets policies.

STRATEGY 8: Education and Outreach

- Bring together community organizations and schools to develop an education and outreach plan with the goal of increasing active transportation use.
- Include programming such as bicycle learn-to-ride events, bike/walk to school days, and week without driving events.
- Include fulfilling requirements of the State's Bike Walk Education in Schools Act (HB4799).

STRATEGY 9: Document Opportunities for Improvement

- Clearly document needed infrastructure improvements to help prioritize future budgeting and to help secure grant funding.
- Develop a formal Active Transportation Plan document officially adopted by Council or Board.
- Incorporate IDOT's Road Vulnerable User Study into the documentation process as a starting point for addressing user safety.



Understanding where the most crashes occur can help prioritize where safety improvements are needed

Community education can help make people more comfortable biking and walking

First and Last Mile Connections

Most transit trips are multimodal. First and last mile connections refer to trips to and from transit service and range from walking to on-demand shuttle services. Enhancing these connections can reduce overall travel times and improve safety, but the core determining factor for ridership impact is likely to still be the quality of the fixed-route transit they connect to and from. Before implementing new programs, first survey potential users to confirm that the service will provide a useful benefit.[2]

STRATEGY 1: Identify Modal Access

- Map existing areas from a specific transit stop or station that can be accessed by vehicle, bicycle, and walking within 5, 10, and 15 minutes.

STRATEGY 2: Infrastructure Gaps

- Identify infrastructure gaps that are resulting in longer or more uncomfortable first and last mile connects for cyclists and pedestrians. Closing these gaps will increase the number of people who can access transit.

STRATEGY 3: Pedestrian & Bicycle Connections

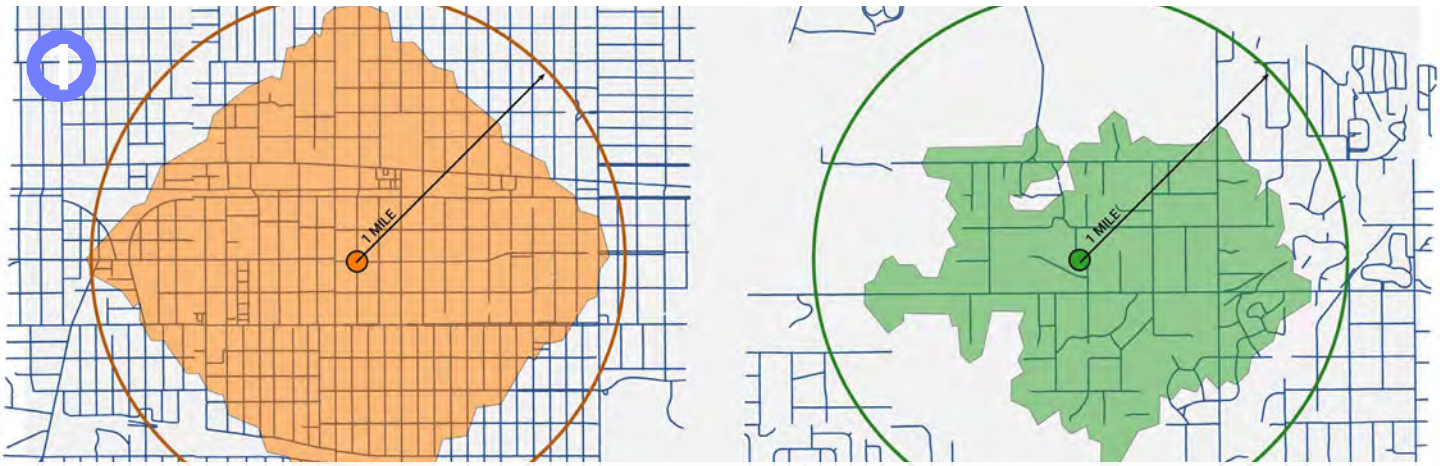
- Prioritize the most critical locations for needed sidewalks and bikeways, starting with those that see frequent pedestrian crossings and bike connections to transit.
- Conduct preliminary planning and Phase 1 engineering to pursue funding for infrastructure.
- Develop safe comfortable, and connected networks of sidewalks and pathways and bikeways that attract riders of all comfort levels.

STRATEGY 4: Bicycle Storage

- Bicycle parking should be located as close as possible to the entrance of a station or stop, and bikeway connections should be made directly to bicycle parking areas.
- Build secure bicycle parking to further incentivize bicycle ridership by including enhanced lighting, security cameras, and storage facilities accessed by key or smartphone app.

STRATEGY 5: Bike & Scooter Share

- Bike and scooter share programs offer additional multimodal connections to transit and additional flexibility for riders.
- Programs often include contracting with private operators but may require public investment to purchase devices and install parking infrastructure.
- Coordinating across municipalities can provide additional economies and scale and connections.
- Seek opportunities to add bike/scooter share at transit stations.



Better connected transportation networks provide more access to destinations. At left is a street grid with the orange area representing walkable streets within a mile radius. At right shows a less walkable, disconnected street network.

First and Last Mile Connections

STRATEGY 6: Pace Dial-a-Ride

- Dial-a-Ride provides curb-to-curb service in various suburban communities.
- Rider eligibility varies across communities, but in many cases is intended for seniors or individuals with disabilities. Consider unconditional or universal eligibility.
- Services are usually set up through a financial partnership between Pace and a county, city, township, or village.

STRATEGY 7: Pace On-Demand

- Pace On-Demand is a reservation-based shared-ride service available in various suburban service areas, providing curb-to-curb service and is available to the entire general public.

STRATEGY 8: Pace VanGO

- VanGO is a self-service program that allows individuals to reserve a Pace van to travel round-trip between a train or bus service and their job within a defined zone.
- The service may be especially useful for riders with work schedules not be compatible with traditional transit services.

STRATEGY 9: Shuttle Service

- Fixed-route or on-demand shuttles can connect transit stops and stations with key destinations, such as major employers or campuses.
- Shuttles should be accommodated with convenient loading at transit stops and stations.
- This service may be provided by local transit agencies or by private operators.

STRATEGY 10: Rideshare, Taxi, & Pickup/Dropoff

- Rideshare and taxi services can provide first and last mile connections to transit without requiring parking at stops or stations.
- Transit facilities should be designed to accommodate safe pick-up/drop-off areas, while still prioritizing pedestrians and cyclist facilities.
- Employers can provide rideshare or taxi discounts to help connect employees to work locations from transit.

STRATEGY 11: Establish Mobility Hubs

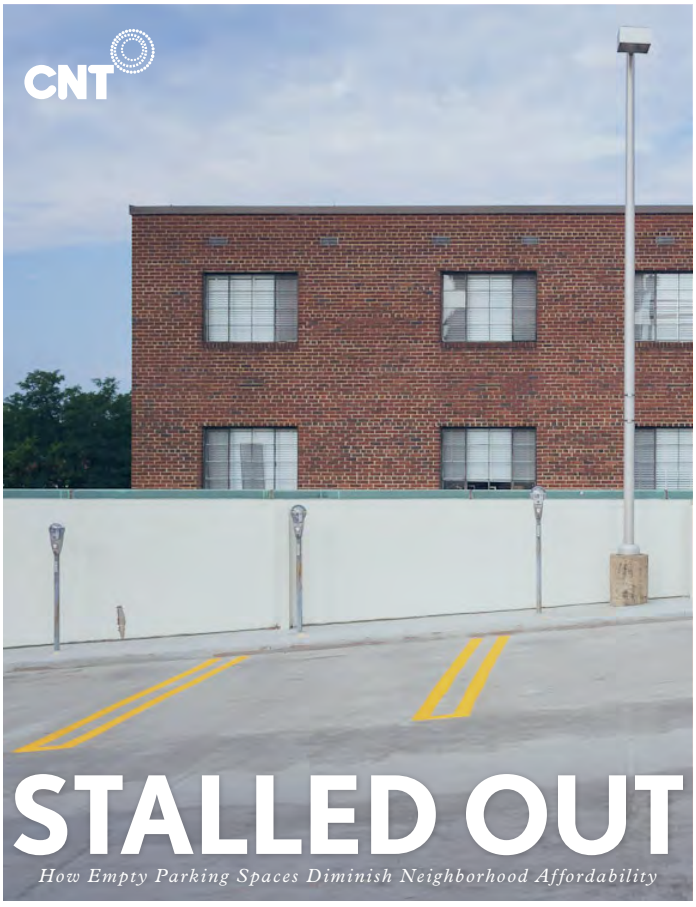
- Partner with transit agencies to identify locations for mobility hubs, where multiple transportation modes are centralized.
- For existing concentrations of multiple modes, consider how to incorporate additional modes and brand as a "mobility hub."
- Incorporate secure bike parking, bike or scooter share, loading zones for rideshare and taxis, secured parking for car sharing or vanpool, e-bike charging, delivery lockers and mini-logistics hubs, and digital signage with transit arrival times and info on other modes.

Pace's Dial-a-Ride service is helpful for those who can not easily get to or from transit.

Downtown Evanston could be classified as a mobility hub with Metra, CTA, Pace, and Divvy bikeshare all at Davis St.

Transit-Friendly Parking Standards

For decades, parking policies have typically been set to ensure there is always enough supply. The result of these policies is a substantial amount of land dedicated to off-street parking and an induced demand to drive (both because of convenience and because destinations become more difficult to access by foot due to parking lots creating more space between destinations). Both of these outcomes run in conflict with creating transit-friendly and walkable communities. Parking structures are bulky, non-human scaled, and expensive. Parking lots often create gaps in vibrant human-scaled design, leading to dead spaces. In response to these issues, communities have begun to update parking policies to more accurately right-size supply.



Not only are excessive parking requirements potentially leading to more car travel, they are also often leading to a substantial amount of empty parking spaces. A 2016 study from the Center for Neighborhood Technology found that one-third of off-street residential parking spots in Chicago were empty at their peak use, and excess parking supply was especially pronounced at buildings within 10 minutes of CTA stations.[3]

The cost of parking provision is typically a substantial portion of the total cost of a development. In an urbanized area, surface parking spaces can cost $3,500 or more to build (without accounting for land costs). The cost of structured parking spaces can be $50,000 per space, and underground parking typically starts at about $100,000 per space. Empty parking spaces represent unnecessary construction costs that drive up total development costs and hurt human-centric character and walkability. Excessive reliance on car travel also leads to greater CO2 emissions. Access to transit is strongly correlated with lower vehicle ownership and there is a higher likelihood self-selection of car-free or car-light residents who choose to live near transit.[4]

There is also the opportunity to reuse land that would have been dedicated to parking for more active uses like additional housing, commercial development or open space amenities.

Transit-friendly parking standards involves two main actions: right-sizing (or eliminating) code-mandated parking minimums and then establishing a process by which a developer can deliver less parking by implementing mitigation strategies.

Transit-Friendly Parking Standards

STRATEGY 1: Existing Utilization Study
- Survey existing off-street parking utilization in areas near transit and commercial districts to determine if current policies and practices are leading to excessive supply (and by how much).
- The City of Evanston found that their TOD area required building 1.25 to 2.0 parking spaces per unit but actual demand was only 1 parking space per unit. Evanston also found that public parking garages reached just 59% occupancy at peak times.[5]

STRATEGY 2: Right-Size Minimum Standards
- Lower or remove minimum parking standards, allowing the developer and the market to determine what is an acceptable amount of parking.
- Cities that have removed parking minimums have seen parking construction reduced by 20%-40%, and policies tend to be most impactful in places that previously had particularly excessive requirements.6
- Removing or lowering parking minimums in business districts can be especially beneficial to small businesses and for filling commercial vacancies. In Evanston and Plainfield, parking requirements are waved for businesses under 4,000 and 5,000 square feet, lowering the barrier to entry.

STRATEGY 3: Maximum Standards
- Consider setting maximum parking standards for sites in close proximity to transit as a further step that ensures that developers cannot build more than a certain level of parking even if they so desire. This can be especially useful to restrict parking over-supply from national retailers who tend to more often build with highly conservative parking standards.

STRATEGY 4: On-Street Parking
- Allow non-residential uses to count some on-street parking spaces toward satisfying off-street requirements (example communities include Hanover Park, Highwood, and Bartlett).

STRATEGY 5: Charge for Parking
- Charge for public parking in downtown and transit-adjacent districts. Pricing parking is key to ensure a more consistent and reliable availability of parking, which gives visitors more confidence that parking is available and reduces unnecessary congestion from vehicles "circling the block" searching for parking.
- Unbundle parking spaces in multifamily properties and office buildings, where possible, for both rental and sale units. This can improve affordability for residents and employees who do not own cars and can encourage the use of transit and other non-auto modes.
- Dynamic pricing and time restrictions can further improve reliability.

STRATEGY 6: Parking Fund/Fees
- Allow a developer to contribute to a public parking fund in lieu of parking spaces not provided on-site (example communities include Bartlett and Highwood).

STRATEGY 7: Parking Benefit District
- Establish a Parking Benefit District that channels parking fee revenue back into localized improvements such as subsidized transit fares and car or bike share membership for areas employees and residents.
- Parking fee revenues can also be used for municipal-wide alternative transportation improvements.
- Districts can be implemented using the same State regulations as Special Service Areas.

Transit-Friendly Parking Standards

STRATEGY 8: Shared-Use Reductions

- Reduce overall parking supply requirements when two or more uses with different peak demands share a parking facility (e.g., an office building and a theater).

STRATEGY 9: Transit-Adjacent Exemptions

- Establish parking requirement exemptions for developments within a certain distance of transit.
- Alternatively, provide development parking credits against zoning parking requirements based on proximity to transit.
- In Chicago, residential parking minimum requirements are reduced by 50% if the development is within a half mile of a CTA or Metra station or within a quarter mile of a high-frequency bus line.

STRATEGY 10: District Parking

- Serve multiple uses with a common parking facility to reduce redundancies and meet various demand peaks across the day.
- Parking facilities can be municipally-owned or private.
- District parking helps establish a 'park once' approach to downtowns or commercial centers, wherein people travel between errands on foot versus by car.

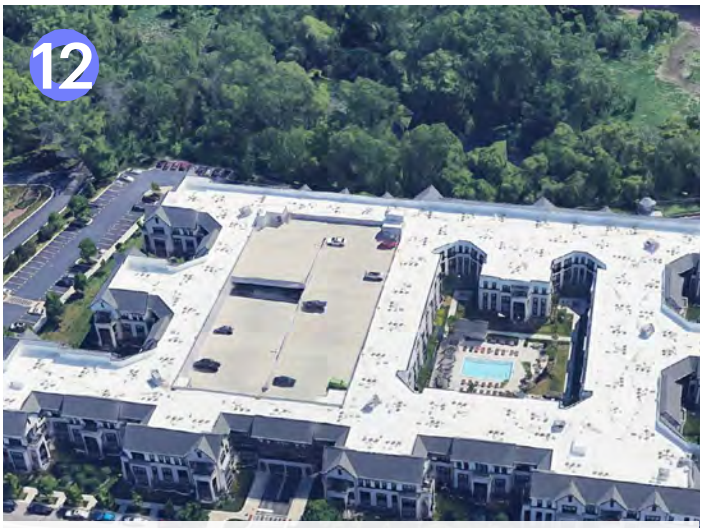
STRATEGY 11: Rear Parking

- Place parking in the rear of a building (hidden from the main pedestrian street frontage) to deemphasize parking as a prioritized mode and enhance the pedestrian experience.
- Rear parking also improves safety and comfort for pedestrians by removing the need for people to walk through a parking lot to access the building.
- Rear parking activates the street frontage by allowing for sidewalk cafes, street sales, window displays, and other elements of 'front porch' culture that are hampered when parking is placed in the front of a business.

STRATEGY 12: Wrapped Parking

- Wrap a parking structure with residential or commercial units to help maintain lively, walkable street frontages.

Placing parking behind buildings activates and frees up the frontage for pedestrian-oriented features



Wrapped parking refers to a parking structure that is wrapped/hidden by other uses facing the street frontage.

Redevelopment of Parking Lots

Commuting patterns and parking utilization are changing rapidly, providing a unique opportunity to explore new uses for parking lots near transit stations. Replacing parking lots with residents or commercial development near transit can induce higher transit use and makes a more human-scaled and walkable community.

STRATEGY 1: Monitor Local Utilization
- Conduct a parking survey within the specific target lot to identify parking utilization on both weekday and weekends.
- Track vehicle turnover in surveys to determine how long vehicles are typically parking for in the lot.
- Right-size commuter parking areas to meet current and projected demand.

STRATEGY 2: Establish Broader Utilization
- Conduct a survey of all publicly available parking in the area surrounding the specific lot.
- Track vehicle turnover in surveys to determine how long vehicles are typically parking for.

STRATEGY 3: Review Cost Structure
- Review parking costs for the specific lot and compare those costs to other parking options available nearby.
- Specifically, evaluate whether parking lot rates are undercutting the ability to use pricing to effectively manage overall parking in the area.

STRATEGY 4: Assess Potential Land Value
- Calculate the potential land value of the specific lot if the lot was instead to be redeveloped.
- Calculate net annual tax base increase based on potential land value.

STRATEGY 5: Curb Management
- Establish appropriate on-street parking regulations depending on adjacent land use (for example, 2-hour parking in downtown districts and daytime regulations near rail stations).

STRATEGY 6: Structured Parking
- Depending on demand, consolidate parking lot spaces into multi-story structured parking to free up space for residential or commercial development.
- Ensure park and ride access is easily accessible for transit commuters so as not to deter transit ridership.

STRATEGY 7: Street and Station Frontage
- When redeveloping a portion of a parking lot, site the residential or commercial development fronting the primary pedestrian streets and station entrances to create an active and interesting environment for pedestrians.
- This siting also reduces trip distances for people walking and biking to transit and provides transit riders with convenient access to commercial amenities.

STRATEGY 8: Potential Redevelopment of Commuter Parking Lots
- Coordinate with Metra to determine if underutilized parking lots can be redeveloped with transit-supportive land uses that benefit both transit and the community.

Transportation Demand Management

Transportation demand management (TDM) policies allow developers to provide fewer parking spaces than the standard code requires in exchange for a series of mitigation strategies. Municipalities set policies defining what specific strategies or bundle of strategies meet a threshold for parking reduction. TDM strategies include infrastructure, policy, financial, or programming nudges all aimed at reducing parking demand and maximizing mobility choice. These TDM strategies are often much less expensive than building the parking spaces they offset, and the area around the development benefits from fewer vehicle trips taken and less space dedicated to parking (space that instead can be used for more units, retail, or open space). TDM can be deployed to reduce parking needs at residential developments and at employment sites or via employer-managed programs—which both support transit friendly communities. The City of Chicago requires developers to submit TDM plans for projects over a certain size or unit threshold.

STRATEGY 1: Decouple Parking Costs

- Rent or sell living units on a separate leases or contracts from parking spaces.
- The goal of this approach is to require renters or buyers to consider if the cost of parking is worth paying to store a vehicle on-site.
- This approach also creates a de facto "discount" for non-vehicle owners.

STRATEGY 2: Free or Reduced Bike/Scooter Share

- Subsidize membership or passes for bike or scooter share programs to reduce the financial barrier to utilizing the services more frequently.
- Impact is likely to be greatest when there are safe and comfortable bicycle and scooter pathways linking transit to key destinations.

STRATEGY 3: On-Site Car Share

- Provide an on-site space for a car share vehicle available to residents.
- Car share is especially useful for residents who need to travel via vehicle only occasionally, allowing them to forgo owning their own vehicle without limiting mobility.
- One car share vehicle has the potential to replace up to 20 private cars.[7]

STRATEGY 4: Free or Reduced Transit Pass

- Subsidize a transit pass to create a financial incentive to take transit more frequently. Subsidizing the full cost of a pass can have an especially high impact.
- Encourage businesses to participate in pre-tax transit set-aside programs.

Bike share and scooter share are important first and last mile connections that may be the reason someone chooses to take transit rather than drive. Incentivizing use of these modes is an example of an effective TDM strategy.

Transportation Demand Management

STRATEGY 5: Employee Daily Paid Parking
- Charge employees a fee for parking as an incentive to explore alternative travel modes (even a small fee can have a key impact on decision making).
- Further, charging a parking fee on a daily basis (as opposed to a monthly cost) allows employees to make daily decisions about what mode works best for them.

STRATEGY 6: Employee Parking Cash-Out
- As an alternative to charging for parking, make cash payment to employees who commute to work without parking.
- Cash-out programs can pay employees based on daily travel habits or in monthly lump-sums.

STRATEGY 7: Secure Bicycle Storage
- Provide indoor covered storage to reduce theft, protect bicycles from the elements, and decrease costs associated with maintenance.
- Secure storage should be provided in office and multi-family residential buildings and include a locked door accessible by key or smartphone app.

STRATEGY 8: Alternate Mode Marketing
- Provide information on vehicle alternatives available and how to use them.
- In many communities, driving to work is the default option, and employees simply may not be aware there are viable alternatives.

STRATEGY 9: Promote Carpool or Vanpool
- Market carpool and vanpool options to help multiple people traveling to a common destination using just a single vehicle.
- Pace Vanpool provides the vehicle and covers all expenses and can either connect directly to destinations or to fixed transit service.

Providing secure, indoor bike storage can reduce theft, protect bikes from rain or snow, and encourage more people to bike. The bike storage lockers pictured here are at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

Oonee is a company that works with public and private partners to design and operate bike parking pods at transit hubs and on city streets using curbside parking spaces.

7. Transit Access Infrastructure & Best Practices

Transit access infrastructure is any infrastructure that allows people to access transit such as sidewalks, crosswalks, bike racks, wayfinding, lighting, shelters, and accessibility elements. This section summarizes best practices and standards for such, with additional resources listed in Chapter 9: Implementation.

Our streets are not just transportation corridors, but our most abundant public spaces. Street design has a substantial impact on safety outcomes, business success, social vibrancy, and the ability for people to access their daily needs without needing to rely on a car. Street designs that rely on maintaining high levels of service and throughput, and trip generation and growth models typically end up producing an environment where vehicle travel is the only safe and comfortable option. Instead, communities should establish desired outcomes and use street design to achieve outcomes for all users, including pedestrians and bicyclists.

Traffic deaths in the Chicago region have surged 50% in the past decade, creating a safety crisis that requires urgent attention. All road users, but especially transit riders, are pedestrians at some point in their journey. Pedestrians and cyclists are more vulnerable to injury and death in traffic crashes than people in vehicles, particularly as the size and weight of the average personal vehicle has grown in recent years. Roadway design best practices need to adapt to new challenges and standards.

Additionally, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure is important because it typically provides the "first- or last- mile" connection to transit, often completed by walking or biking. Well-designed transit access infrastructure keeps transit users safe and encourages increased transit use.

The tools on the following pages are best practices that local governments and developers can utilize to make areas more accessible to transit, more walkable for residents and visitors, and a more pleasing and safer environment for all.

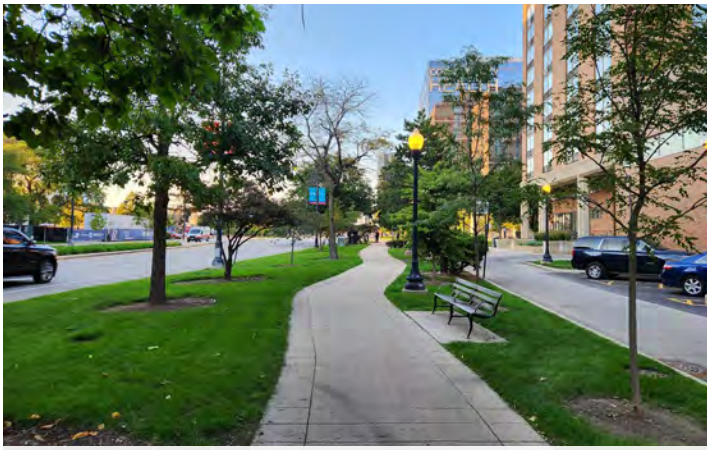
SIDEWALKS AND SIDEWALK CONNECTIONS

All transit stations and stops should be connected to commercial and residential properties within walking distance by direct and continuous sidewalks. Some transit users are forced to walk long distances due to lack of connectivity. Sidewalk connections are important because pedestrians face substantial safety risks if forced to walk within roadways or on shoulders. Roadways with no sidewalks on either side should be prioritized for improvements. Best practice is to install sidewalks on both sides of a roadway, except in rare situations where a sidewalk on one side of a roadway would provide connections to or from no origins or destinations. Pedestrians should not be expected to cross a roadway to the other side and then cross back to navigate a sidewalk gap. Multi-Use Paths (see below) may replace sidewalks, but not in areas with high pedestrian volumes.

Width and Material: Sidewalks must measure at least 4' wide to meet Americans with Disability Act (ADA) standards but should be built at least 5' wide except in exceptional circumstances. Sidewalks built 6-8' wide increase pedestrian comfort, and sidewalks over 8' wide may be necessary for high pedestrian volumes. Sidewalks should be paved using concrete or permeable pavement (note: permeable pavement offers stormwater management benefits, but also requires more regular maintenance to prevent clogging and avoid tripping hazards).

Condition: Sidewalks in poor condition should be rebuilt because they create substantial accessibility and safety issues for all pedestrians, but especially for people using mobility-assistance devices (such as wheelchairs) and people using strollers.

Planted Buffer Space: Sidewalks should include a planted buffer space between vehicle travel lanes and the sidewalk to improve pedestrian comfort. Any amount of buffer is helpful, but 5' minimum is best practice (which is wide enough to plant street trees). The higher the adjacent roadway's traffic volume and speed, the more important a buffer is for comfort and safety. Planting trees adjacent to sidewalks also offers shade to improve the comfort of walking on hot and sunny days. Plantings may include grass strips with trees, raised planters, or tree pits.



Buffer space with grass strip and trees

Buffer space with grass strip and trees

Lighting: Sidewalks should be well-lit for pedestrian safety and comfort, which is especially important at crossings. Lighting that meets the needs of vehicles should not be assumed to meet the needs of pedestrians. Lamps installed closer to the ground and at more frequent intervals than standard vehicle-focused lighting can help provide pedestrians with an increased sense of security.

Rail Crossings: Concrete sidewalks should continue across rail crossings, and any rail crossing with gates for vehicles should also have sidewalk gates.

Pedestrian-oriented lighting

Sidewalk rail crossing

MULTI-USE PATHS

Multi-use paths can accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists and may be used instead of a sidewalk on one side of a roadway in areas of lower pedestrian volumes. Multi-use paths can be especially helpful for creating pedestrian and bicycle connections through low-density, rural, recreational, and natural areas and where there are desired paths of pedestrian and bicycle travel that don't align with roadways. Multi-use paths are also the recommended bicycle facility for roadways with higher speeds and/or volumes of vehicles (see section on Bikeways for more detail).

Width and Material: Multi-use paths should measure at least 10' wide, and 12' is preferred. Multi-use paths are typically paved in asphalt and may include center-lane striping in higher-volume areas to denote directional separation.

Multi-use path

ADA ACCESSIBILITY

Sidewalks should be designed and built to be accessible to all people. Sidewalks at all crosswalks and station access points should have curb ramps built to ADA specifications, including a running slope not greater than 1:12, a width of at least 36" and a top landing area at least 36" deep. Curb ramps must also be designed to prevent accumulation of water. At intersections, distinct curb ramps should be built for each crossing direction. ADA curb ramps should include detectable warning surfaces that are colored in high contrast to the sidewalk surface and follow specific tactile pattern standards. Additional ADA specifications can be found via the U.S Access Board.[1]

ADA Curb Ramp

PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

Mark All Crossings: Outside of exceptional circumstances, every crossing at an intersection should be marked. Leaving one crossing unmarked forces a pedestrian to potentially triple their crossing distance and triple their time spent at risk within the roadway if they need to go around the intersection rather than directly across it.

Crossing Frequency: Marking pedestrian crossings frequently along a corridor can increase pedestrian accessibility, reduce travel time, and decrease instances of pedestrians crossing outside of marked areas where motorists are not expecting a potential conflict. The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) recommends that pedestrians should not have to walk more than a total of three minutes out of their way to legally cross a street (including walking to the crossing and doubling back to get to the other side of their original location).[2] This rule of thumb suggests marked pedestrian crossings roughly every 800 feet.

High-Visibility Crosswalk Markings are more visible to drivers than standard parallel crosswalk lines, better alerting drivers to the presence of pedestrians. "Continental" crosswalks feature wide painted bars in line with traffic flow and create more visible crosswalk markings. Crosswalks need to be repainted when the paint begins to wear off in order to maintain high visibility. The frequency of required maintenance will depend on materials used.

Pedestrian Signal Heads and Countdowns: All crosswalks at signalized intersections should feature pedestrian signal heads indicating when it is safe or unsafe for pedestrians to cross. Pedestrian countdown timers further help pedestrians make safe judgments about crossing and are strongly recommended.

Continental Crosswalk

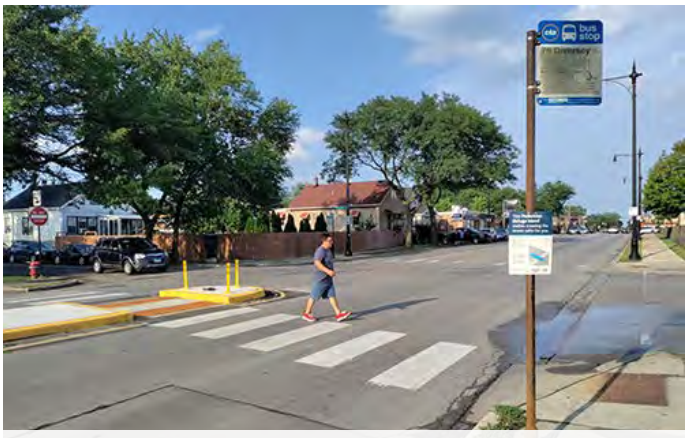
PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS (CONT.)

Curb Extensions (also known as bump-outs) extend the sidewalk into the parking lane at crossings in order to reduce pedestrian crossing distance within the roadway and make pedestrians more visible to drivers. Curb extensions are often installed at intersections but can be implemented mid-block as well.

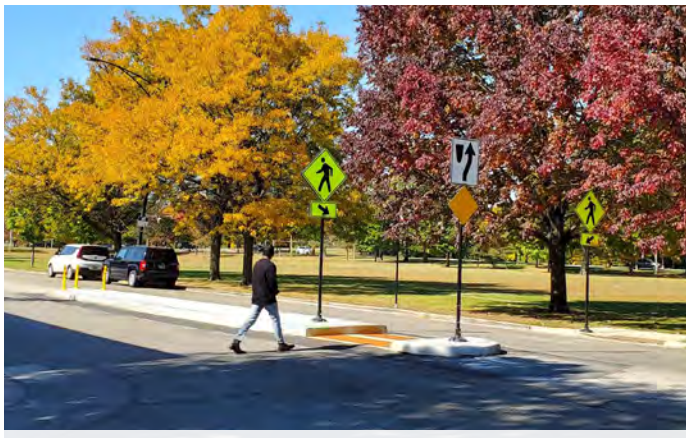
Curb extension

Curb extension

Pedestrian Refuge Islands provide pedestrians a safe refuge space to partially cross one direction of vehicle traffic and wait until it is safe to cross the opposite direction of vehicle traffic. Pedestrian refuge islands should measure at least 8′ wide and preferably 10′ or wider on streets with higher traffic speeds or volumes.



Pedestrian refuge island



Pedestrian refuge island

PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS (CONT.)

Raised Crosswalks elevate the pedestrian crossing to the level of the sidewalk, creating a continuous, direct path for pedestrians. Raised crosswalks emphasize pedestrian priority, can increase the visibility of pedestrians to drivers, and can slow vehicle movement at crossings to improve reaction times. Raised crosswalks are recommended for stop-controlled or uncontrolled intersections and can also be utilized at mid-block crossings.

Raised crosswalk

Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) are user-activated warning lights at pedestrian or bicycle crossings that alert drivers to users at the crossing. RRFBs are recommended at mid-block crossings, trail crossings, or non-signalized intersections where pedestrians or bicyclists face long wait times for a break in traffic to safely cross (especially on higher-volume roads). The unique flashing pattern of the RRFBs have been shown to induce vehicle yielding at a higher rate than traditional warning lights. Ensure that the button used to activate the RRFB is easy to reach for children and people in wheelchairs and to people bicycling without needing to dismount.

Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons

INTERSECTION VEHICLE DESIGN GUIDANCE

This section provides guidance for design engineers on minimizing intersection curb radii to improve safety. This is language that local governments could provide to internal staff or to consultants designing projects.

The primary goal of intersection design is to ensure the highest level of safety for all users while accommodating access and turning movements for typical vehicles present. On many corridors, a disproportionate number of crashes occur at intersections. Corner design should prioritize minimizing radii to the greatest extent possible. The tighter a corner curb radius, the slower a driver must navigate a turn. A slower turn provides more reaction time to detect pedestrians and bicyclists and requires a shorter stopping distance, making it easier to avoid a crash. Pedestrians and cyclists are particularly vulnerable to turning vehicles due to driver blind spots.

Turning Speed: When running analyses to determine corner radius design, the turning speed should be set to no more than 10 mph at signalized intersections and no more than 5 mph at unsignalized intersections.

Design Vehicle: Selecting the proper design vehicle should err on the side of selecting a smaller vehicle that best represents typical vehicles using the intersection and avoids over-designing turning movements to accommodate only very occasional larger vehicles. The recommended default design vehicle for any intersection that includes a local or minor collector street is an SU-30. A larger vehicle may be used if a study identifies that a particular vehicle frequently making a specific turning movement (such as a bus) is larger than an SU-30. For all other intersection types or intersections featuring a street under IDOT jurisdiction, the default design vehicle should be determined using either the IDOT BDE Manual or BLRS Manual.

Control Vehicle: While the design vehicle dictates intersection design for common everyday use, the control vehicle allows access by necessary and occasional vehicles. To ensure that access for EMS, fire, moving vans, and sanitation vehicles is not precluded, an intersection should be designed to allow a control vehicle to utilize all traversable parts of an intersection, including driving over curbs and across centerlines.

Mitigation Strategies: Where larger design vehicles are necessary, strategies should be utilized to mitigate curb radius size:

- Recessing the opposing stop bar at signalized intersection
- Assuming large vehicles will turn into the center-most lane
- Allowing for vehicles to use oversteer in analyses
- Restricting turning movements of large trucks

Slip Lanes: The larger turning radii of slip lanes allow vehicles to make turns at higher speeds, putting pedestrians and cyclists at higher risk of injury and death. Slip lanes therefore should be avoided except in rare circumstances.

Curb Cuts: Driveway access curb cuts should be minimized and consolidated to the greatest degree possible to reduce potential vehicle turning conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists. When possible, curb cuts and access points should be installed on minor streets to reduce potential conflicts on streets with higher volumes of pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders.

Intersection corner radii

BIKEWAYS

Bikeways provide important connections to transit, often representing the "first- or last-mile" segment between home or a destination to/from transit. Many daily destinations and needs are located within just a few miles of home—a distance that can be easily accessible by bicycle.

However, bicycle accessibility is highly dependent on whether potential riders feel safe traveling to their destination. To make cycling a realistic option for all residents—whether they're 8 or 80 years old—it's critical to build bicycle routes that are safe and comfortable for as many residents as possible. Off-street trails and protected bike lanes are going to provide safety and a sense of comfort to the most potential users possible. Low-traffic residential streets can also provide low-stress bicycle routes if steps are taken to calm vehicle speeds.

Protected Bicycle Lane: Protected bicycle lanes are physically separated from vehicular travel lanes and can be both one-way and two-way. Separation can be achieved through a variety of treatments placed within a buffer between vehicle and bicycle traffic, including: a) flexible delineators or bollards; b) parking lanes; c) curbs or concrete medians; or d) planters with landscaping. Protected lanes provide safer bicycle facilities on roads with moderate-to-high vehicle speeds and volumes. All else being equal, one-way protected bicycle lanes are typically preferable to two-way lanes for intersection operations, wayfinding, and access to destinations. Two-way protected bicycle lanes need particular design attention at non-signalized intersections where drivers are looking for a clear gap to turn. However, limited right-of-way, concerns about parking removal, and unique intersections may render two-way protected bicycle lanes as the only option. In this case, a two-way protected lane designed well is preferable to a non-protected lane.

- Facility width (one-way): 6.5'
- Facility width (two-way): 12'
- Buffer width from vehicles: 3'

Protected bicycle lane

Protected bicycle lane

BIKEWAYS (CONT.)

Buffered Bicycle Lane: Buffered bicycle lanes provide painted buffer space on one or both sides of the bicycle lane to create greater separation between bicyclists and passing vehicles and/or on-street parking. Buffered bicycle lanes may benefit from some physical protection elements at conflict points, such as near intersections. While buffered bicycle lanes provide more separation between people biking and vehicles than standard painted bicycle lanes, they are still most appropriate on streets with low to moderate travel speeds and volumes.

- Lane width: 6'
- Buffer width: 3'

Buffered bicycle lane

Striped Bicycle Lane: Striped or painted bicycle lanes demarcate right-of-way that is specifically designated for people bicycling. Painting the entire width of the lane green can provide additional attention to the bicycle lane or specific conflict points. Because striped/painted bicycle lanes do not provide physical separation between vehicles and people biking, they are most appropriate on streets with lower travel speeds and volumes.

- Lane width (against curb): 6.5' (including gutter apron)
- Lane width (against parking lane): 6.5'

Striped bicycle lane

Neighborhood greenway, contra-flow bicycle lane

BIKEWAYS (CONT.)

Selecting a Bicycle Facility: The chart below is directly adapted from NACTO's Contextual Guidance for Selecting All Ages and Abilities Bikeways document and outlines minimum facility recommendations based on traffic volumes and speeds. Generally, the higher the volume and/or speed of traffic, the more separation a bicycle facility needs to ensure user comfort.

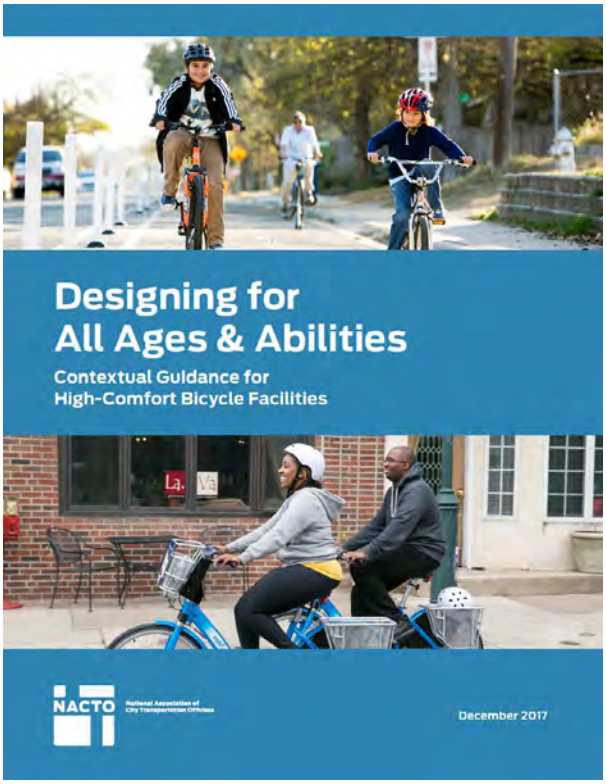
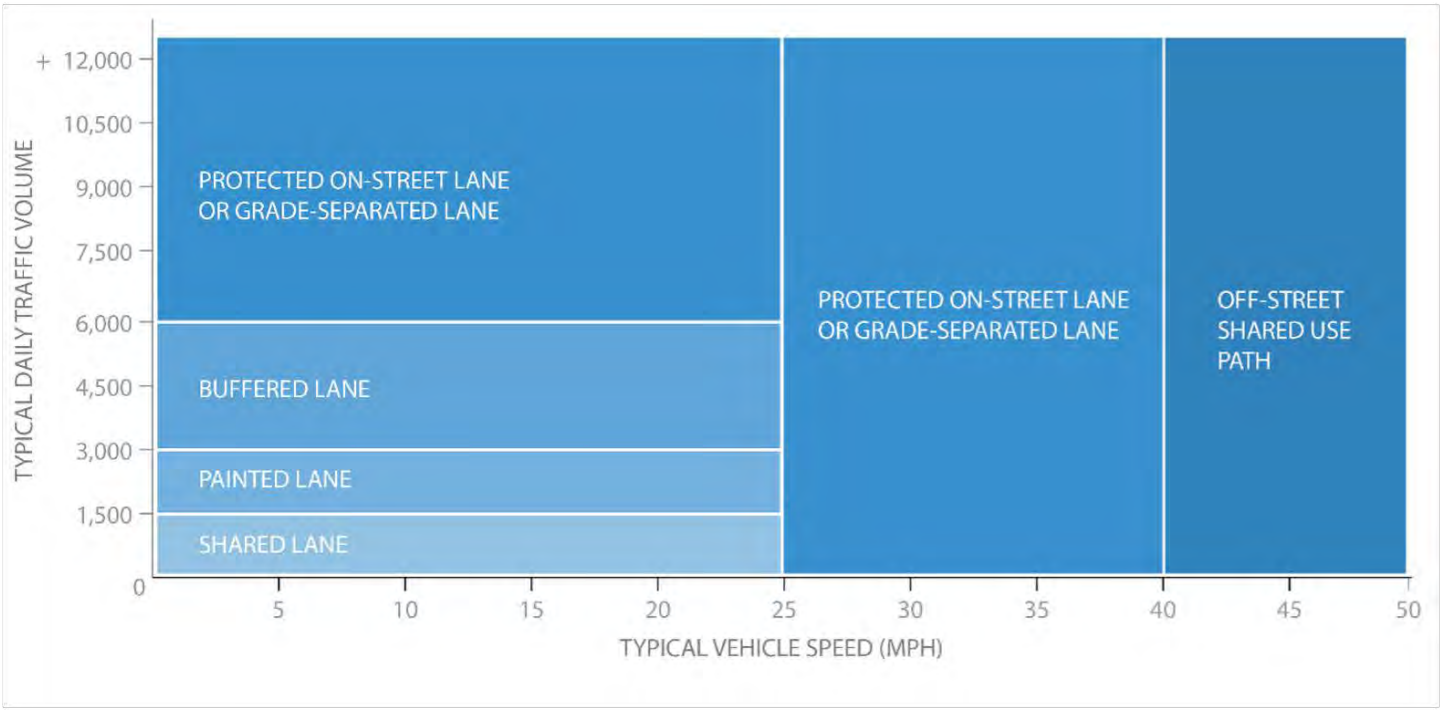


Figure 7.1 Guide for selecting a bicycle facility (adapted from NACTO's Contextual Guidance for Selecting All Ages and Abilities Bikeways)

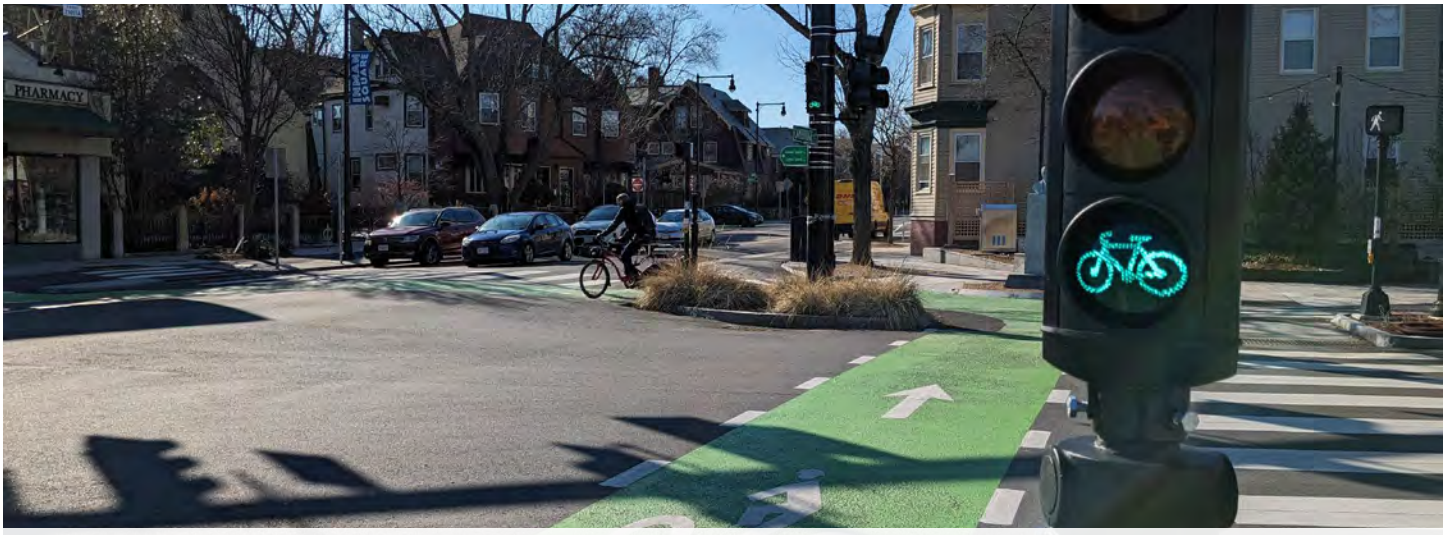


BIKEWAYS (CONT.)

Bicycle conflict zone markings

Conflict Zone Markings: Where bicycle lanes cross points of potential conflict, such as across intersections or driveways, additional markings should be provided to alert both cyclists and drivers to each other. These markings are often either solid green paint lane infill or dashed green lanes.

Bicycle Signals: Unique bicycle signals can be beneficial in three ways: 1) to give cyclists a leading start on vehicle traffic, which improves driver visibility of cyclists; 2) to hold cyclists during a vehicle turning phase to avoid dangerous conflicts; and 3) to act as a redundant signal to clarify or emphasize bicycle permissions. Bicycle signals should be placed alongside standard vehicle signal heads, and additional smaller-format signals at bicycle-rider eye-level can further improve the cycling experience. The NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guidelines provide guidance on the design and operation of bike signal actuation operation at intersections. Using bicycle specific signals as well as dedicated bicycle detection systems, such as inductive-loop sensors and video detection, at intersections will ensure that bikes are properly detected and given a green signal when needed.



Bicycle signal

BICYCLE PARKING

Parking Racks: Bike racks should be visible from and close to the entrance they serve—ideally 50'or less. While the "inverted U" rack is simple, its design is highly effective for bike security and holding a bike upright. Alternate or creative rack designs may be aesthetically interesting, but they are often inferior to the "inverted U" rack for both security and organization. Bike racks should be anchored into the ground with tamper-proof bolts, and each rack should be spaced at least 3' apart to accommodate two bikes at each rack. The Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) publishes an "Essentials of Bike Parking" guide that has further details on rack design, installation, and spacing standards and is widely recognized as the leading industry standard.[3]

Covered Bicycle Parking: Covered bicycle parking provides cover from rain and snow (although less complete weather protection and less security than secure parking facilities). Covered parking shelters come in a wide variety of sizes to accommodate different space constraints. The span of the roof should be large enough to cover the entire length of bicycles, and the minimum roof height should be at least 8'.

Secure Bicycle Parking: Secure bicycle parking helps bicycle riders feel more confident that their devices will be protected from damage and theft and can take the form of freestanding secure storage structures or indoor bike parking rooms built into other structures. Secure parking facilities are accessible only to authorized users who have access via a key, swipe card, or app. Secure bicycle parking facilities can also accommodate high-capacity racks, but at least some surface-mounted "inverted-U" racks should be provided for cargo bikes and for users who cannot easily lift a bicycle into position at high-capacity racks.

Covered bicycle parking

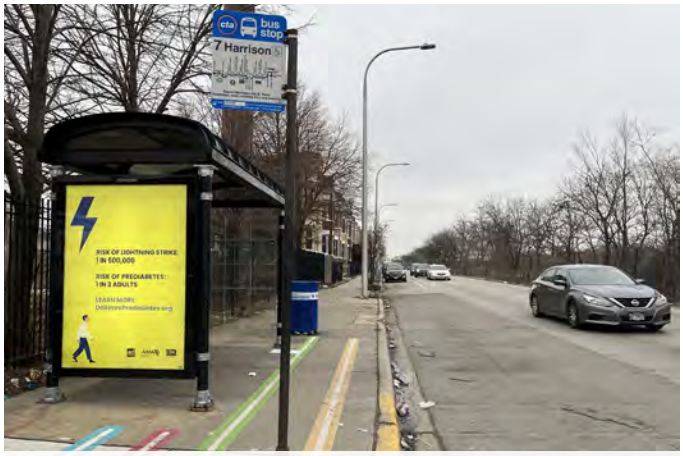
Secured bicycle parking

BUS STOPS

Bus Stop Landing Pads: The best practice for bus stops should include a concrete landing pad for pedestrian waiting. Bus stop landing pads should provide a minimum clear length of 8' (measured from the cub or roadway edge) and a minimum clear width of 5' (measured parallel to the roadway) to accommodate riders using wheelchairs and other accessibility devices. Landing pads should not be obstructed by any physical features such as utility poles, signs, or benches. All bus stop landing pads should be directly connected to the broader sidewalk and/or trail network—a critical requirement for ensuring accessibility for all users.

Bus stop landing pad

Bus Shelters: Bus shelters provide a sense of security and shelter from rain, wind, and snow while passengers wait for arriving buses. Bus shelters can also provide lighting to enhance security and informational panels with route and scheduling details. Bus shelters will be beneficial for riders at any bus stop but are particularly important for bus stops in locations with no other shelter from the elements, at high-ridership stops, and at bus stops along routes with lower-frequency service where riders are likely to wait longer for the next bus. Seating for at least three adults and one wheelchair space should be provided at bus shelters. Enhanced bus service, such as Pace Pulse, will have additional bus stop design requirements (see Pace's Transit Supportive Design Guidelines).



Bus shelter

Additional Bus Stop Amenities: Bus stops should have lighting to help drivers see riders waiting at the stop, and benches and trash receptacles to improve riders' comfort.

RAIL STATION AMENITIES

Warming Shelters: Warming shelters help keep passengers comfortable in cold temperatures while waiting for scheduled service to arrive. Warming shelters should be activated by push buttons that need to be re-activated every few minutes to reduce wasted energy.

Train station with lighting, bike parking, trees, and interior waiting area

Plaza Space: Station plazas can accommodate small events or markets that build off the foot traffic already coming and going to and from stations. At most stations, keep plazas small and intimate to avoid creating spaces that feel empty. Consider installing electrical hook-ups to support events.

Additional Station Amenities: Planters, trees, benches, lighting, and trash receptacles are all additional amenities that create welcoming stations and improve the sense of place. The responsibility for construction and maintenance of such station amenities varies from station to station.

ADA-accessible ramp, pedestrian lighting, and landscaping at train station

MOBILITY HUBS

Mobility hubs are locations where people can access multiple types of transportation modes in a central location. Mobility hubs are often located at transit facilities such as bus stop or rail stations and may include:

- Secure bicycle parking
- Bike or scooter share
- Loading zones for ride hail vehicles and taxis
- Secured parking for car sharing or vanpool
- E-bike charging
- Delivery lockers and mini-logistics hubs
- Digital signage with transit arrival times, mode or route transfer information, and wayfinding
- Public plazas and gathering spaces

Mobility hubs should be designed to make transition between modes, intuitive, quick, and seamless. The key goal of a mobility hub is to make it easier and more convenient for people to complete a trip using multiple modes. Many communities already have mobility hubs even if they've never been labeled as such. For existing concentrations of multiple modes, consider how additional modes can be incorporated or how the existing coordination of and flow between modes can be further enhanced. Branding existing multimodal concentrations as mobility hubs can help highlight the convenience of options for riders.

When existing community facilities and public services—for example, health clinics, daycares, senior centers, public libraries, etc.—are part of the mix, they can also create opportunities for bridging economic and digital divides in accessing services, serving a wider share of the public as well addressing issues of climate resiliency, equity, access, and affordability.

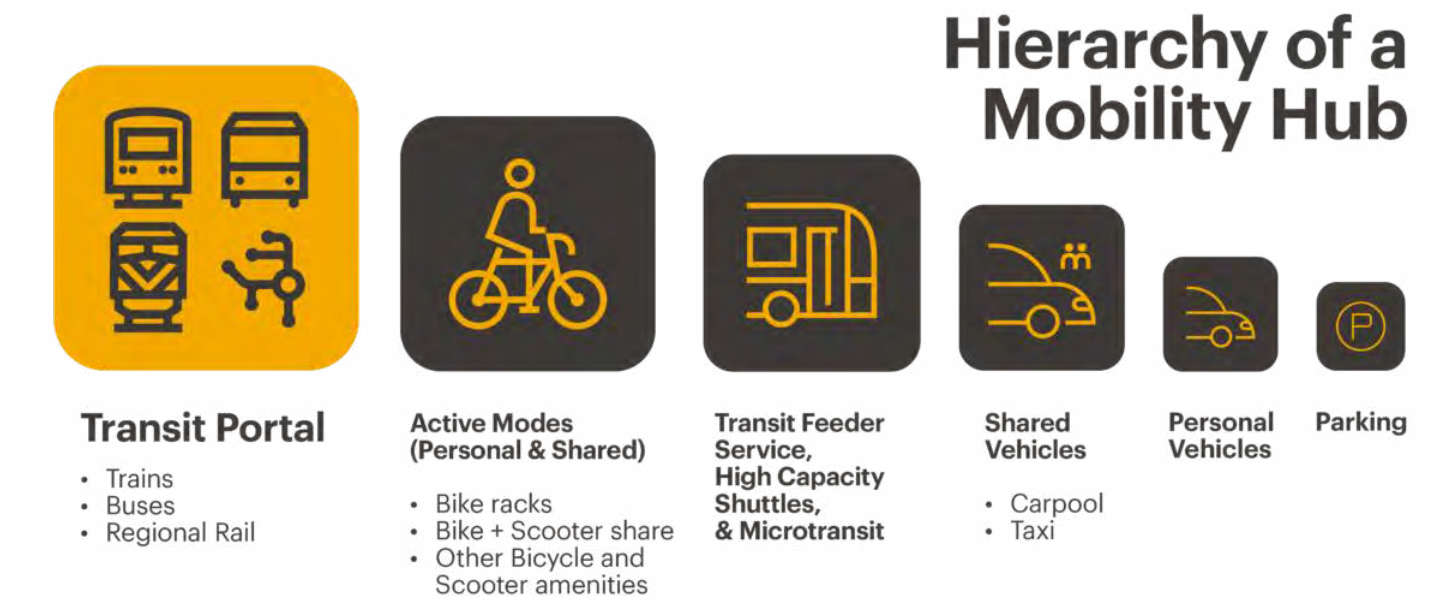
Mobility hubs can range in scale and size. Often, smaller mobility hubs will fit within the boundaries of existing infrastructure. More substantial mobility hubs may require reconfiguring existing space around a station or designing a purpose-built space as part of a new station or development.

The RTA's *Transit is the Answer* strategic plan commits the agency to supporting planning and construction of mobility hubs in partnership with local communities.

"Mobility hubs should include at least two mode choices and ideally be centered on a public transit station. These modes should be low- or no-pollution emitting and be supplied at low- or no-cost to the user, thereby facilitating transit connections between bicycle and pedestrian networks and available transit service.

For example, a mobility hub could be a downtown train station with bike sharing, paratransit connections, bike routes, and safe marked pedestrian crossings, although mobility hubs in urban areas could also include connections between multiple transit modes (train, bus, etc.) and various micro mobility offerings (bike share, scooter share, etc.)."

-RTA Mobility Hubs Guide



8. Case Studies

This section presents ten case studies that offer various lessons for how to make communities more transit-friendly. The examples are both local and national and represent a range of community types (i.e. urban, suburban, lower-density) and demographic diversity. The case studies showcase both success stories and incremental progress.

RTA Region Case Studies

1. Logan Square ETOD
2. Woodlawn TOD
3. Lombard Downtown TOD
4. Pace Pulse Milwaukee Line
5. Harlem Avenue Corridor
6. Richton Park TOD

National Case Studies

7. North Quincy Station TOD - Quincy MA (Metro Boston)
8. Harrison Station Area TOD - Harrison, NY (Hudson Valley)
9. St. Paul University Avenue Light Rail - St. Paul, MN
10. Indianapolis IndyGO BRT - Indianapolis, IN

CASE STUDY

Logan Square ETOD

LOCATION: Logan Square, Chicago, IL (Cook County)
TRANSIT FACILITY(S): CTA Blue Line train and buses
COMMUNITY TYPE: Urban

Planning and community development in Logan Square has historically been built upon a collaborative, community-led spirit that empowers the community to advocate for development and expand access to opportunities in an equitable manner.

This spirit played a crucial part in the preparation of the Logan Square Blue Line ETOD Action Plan, which included a collaboration between CMAP, RTA, Elevated Chicago, Palenque LSNA, Center for Changing Lives, LUCHA, and other partners.

This strategy builds on several efforts that the City of Chicago has taken to advance TOD along the extensive network of CTA and Metra stations. Through a series of TOD ordinances, first adopted by City Council in 2013 and then amended in 2015 and 2019, the City has promoted greater development opportunities near transit. Starting in 2019, the TOD ordinance included an equity focus and expanded provisions near high frequency bus corridors. In 2022, the Connected Communities Ordinance strengthened the provisions to require less off-street parking to encourage the use of transit, provide increased density around transit, and expand inclusionary affordable housing within new development projects.

The Logan Square ETOD Plan applies these types of strategies at the local level by increasing transit accessibility, encouraging more walking and biking, preserving legacy and small businesses, celebrating the rich cultures of the immigrant communities, providing safe and welcoming spaces for the existing community, and making the built environment more accessible and safer for all users.

The Lucy Gonzalez Parsons Apartments is one of the most successful projects to emerge from this ETOD approach, as the community partnered with the City of Chicago Department of Housing (DOH) to build a 100% affordable housing development (100 units) on a former city-owned parking lot next to the CTA Logan Square Blue Line Station.

The Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) started construction on the redesign of Milwaukee Avenue in 2024 into a Complete Street with improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure including a new large pedestrian plaza in Logan Square which will become the home for one of the City's largest farmers markets as well as other events. Other projects include La Placita community plaza, the CTA station canopy renovation, redesign of the Logan Square Park traffic circle, and additional affordable housing.

STRATEGIES

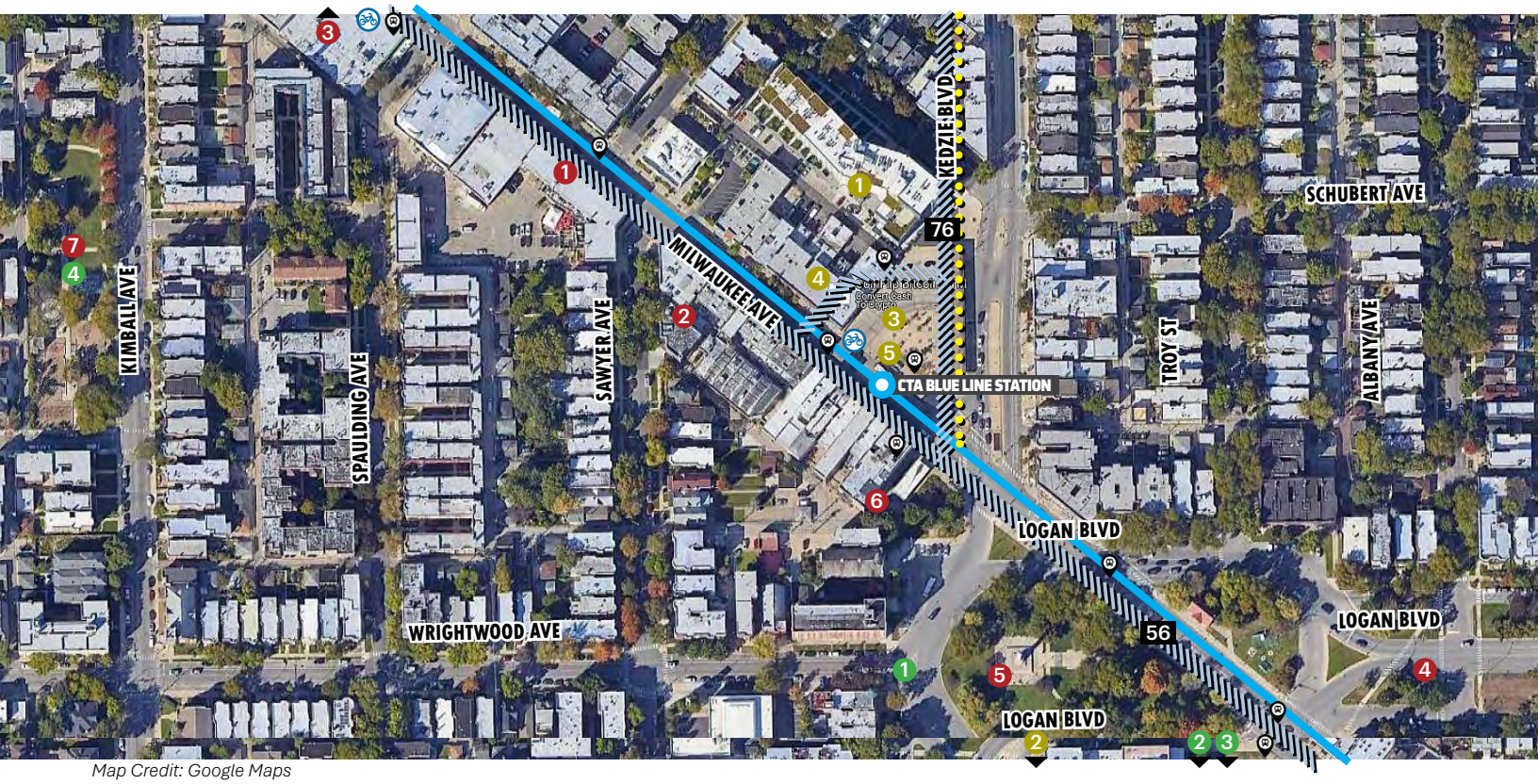
Tools and approaches used in this case study that can be adapted to other TOD areas

- **Adding ETOD to city policies:** Palenque LSNA was part of the City's ETOD Working Group that developed Chicago's ETOD Policy Plan that advances equitable, healthy, and sustainable development around transit. This plan was instrumental in adding ETOD policies into other City policies, including the Affordable Requirements Ordinance (ARO) and the Connected Communities Ordinance.
- **Organizing the community:** Logan Square has a storied history of community organizing that enables multiple voices to come together to advocate for critical issues like housing, small businesses, immigrant rights, and anti-displacement. Community organizing was highly influential to making the Lucy Gonzalez Parsons Apartments 100% affordable, adding Latin American culture in the La Placita community plaza design, and ensuring new development minimizes displacement of existing residents and businesses.
- **Building partnerships:** As shown by the various groups involved, advancing equitable TOD without exacerbating gentrification takes a collaborative effort to put forth a strong messaging approach when communicating with developers, elected officials, and the community.

(1)(2) Conceptual renderings of CTA Blue Line station area, including canopy redesign, reconfigured bus lanes, and future La Placita public plaza with community-inspired design elements; (3) Logan Square's longstanding anti-displacement message; (4) CTA bus stop and Divvy bike share dock next to CTA Blue Line station; (5) 100% affordable Lucy Gonzalez Parsons Apartments north of CTA station

Image Credits: (1)(2) CDOT; (3) Palenque LSNA; (4)(5) Egret & Ox Planning

CASE STUDY Logan Square ETOD | Logan Square, Chicago, IL



Map Credit: Google Maps

Activity Generators

1. Milwaukee Avenue Corridor
2. Logan Theatre
3. Hairpin Arts Center
4. Farmers Market
5. Logan Square Park
6. Paseo Prairie Community Garden
7. Unity Park

Equitable Elements

1. Lucy Gonzalez Parsons Apartments
2. 2525 N Kedzie Blvd (AFFORDABLE UNITS)
3. CTA Station Canopy Redesign
4. La Placita Community Plaza
5. Accessible CTA El Station

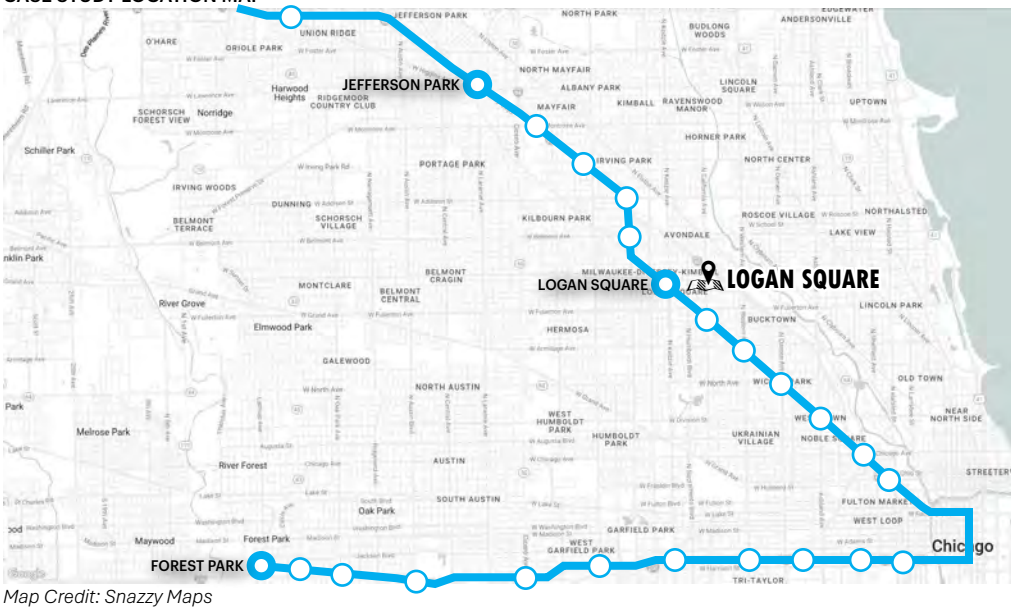
TOD Opportunities

1. Logan Square Park Rotary Redesign
2. Mega Mall North Site (POTENTIAL)
3. Mega Mall South Site (POTENTIAL)
4. Unity Park Expansion (POTENTIAL)

Access Infrastructure

- CTA El Station (LOGAN SQUARE)
- CTA El Line
- CTA Bus Lines (56 MILWAUKEE) (76 DIVERSEY)
- CTA Bus Stops
- Divvy Bike Share Stations
- Dedicated Bike Path

CASE STUDY LOCATION MAP



Map Credit: Snazzy Maps

CASE STUDY

Woodlawn TOD

LOCATION: Woodlawn, Chicago, IL (Cook County)
TRANSIT FACILITY(S): CTA Green Line, multiple CTA buses, and Metra Electric (ME) Line
COMMUNITY TYPE: Urban

The Woodlawn neighborhood on Chicago's South Side is working on multiple projects to build up TOD around the CTA Cottage Grove Green Line Station. One project is Park Station Lofts, which was constructed on City-owned property at the southeast corner of E. 63rd Street and S. Maryland Ave. This development provides a mixed-income, mixed-use, affordable living community with 41 of the 58 apartment units serving households earning between 30% to 60% area median income (AMI). Park Station Lofts is within short walking distance to the University of Chicago. In addition to apartments, Park Station will include retail space, live-work units, a management office, and community space.

In addition, Park Station Lofts will be the first development to adhere to the requirements established by the Woodlawn Affordable Housing Preservation Ordinance, which was passed in 2020 to protect Woodlawn from gentrification that may occur due to the attraction of the Obama Presidential Center, which is under construction nearby to the east in Jackson Park. Drafted by local officials and neighborhood organizations, the ordinance will ensure the preservation of affordable housing in Woodlawn via affordability requirements on City-owned land developed as rental and for-sale housing.

A few blocks away is a second TOD project called Woodlawn Station, which was coordinated by the Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH) providing 70 apartment units that serve households earning between 20% to 120% AMI. An additional two buildings to the south provide 15 more rental units. Supported by a federal Choice Neighborhoods Initiative grant, Woodlawn Station benefited from the Woodlawn Affordable Housing Preservation Ordinance that enabled a 50% reduction in required parking as a TOD project.

Three other nearby developments that enhance the vitality of the Woodlawn neighborhood are located along Cottage Grove Avenue. Jewel-Osco, which replaced the former Grove Parc Plaza with Woodlawn's first full-service grocer in 40+ years, provides over 300 full- and part-time jobs since opening in 2019. Burnham at Woodlawn Park, which opened in 2015, is an age-restricted (age 62+) mixed income senior living community and garden space shared with the MetroSquash youth and family center. Neighborhood-based Family Health opened the Woodlawn Health Center next to the CTA Green Line in 2022 offering affordable healthcare to the community.

These projects illustrate how TOD projects are core pieces of the ongoing revitalization of the Woodlawn neighborhood. In addition, the Woodlawn Affordable Housing Preservation Ordinance is an example of how an equitable approach to TOD is playing a crucial role.

STRATEGIES

Tools and approaches used in this case study that can be adapted to other TOD areas

- **Codifying community preservation:** A new development often brings the potential to upend the socioeconomic fabric of the community, which is even more significant as many communities face a housing crisis and fears of gentrification. Ordinances and community benefits agreements (CBAs) like Woodlawn's Affordable Housing Preservation Ordinance are an effective means of codifying community preservation efforts.
- **Planning ahead:** While not all TODs have a national treasure being built nearby, Woodlawn offers a lesson in planning with foresight knowing another development, site improvement, or other project will have an impact on housing, commerce, and employment of the surrounding neighborhood. By planning ahead like Woodlawn did with their Affordable Housing Preservation Ordinance, TOD projects can incorporate uses and amenities that balance the impacts of other activities in the area.
- **Building on city-owned land:** The utilization of municipally owned land for TOD is an effective means of removing certain barriers to development. In addition to the municipality retaining controlling interest of the land, the removal of land acquisition costs and negotiations with other property owners can expedite a TOD process without these particular hurdles.

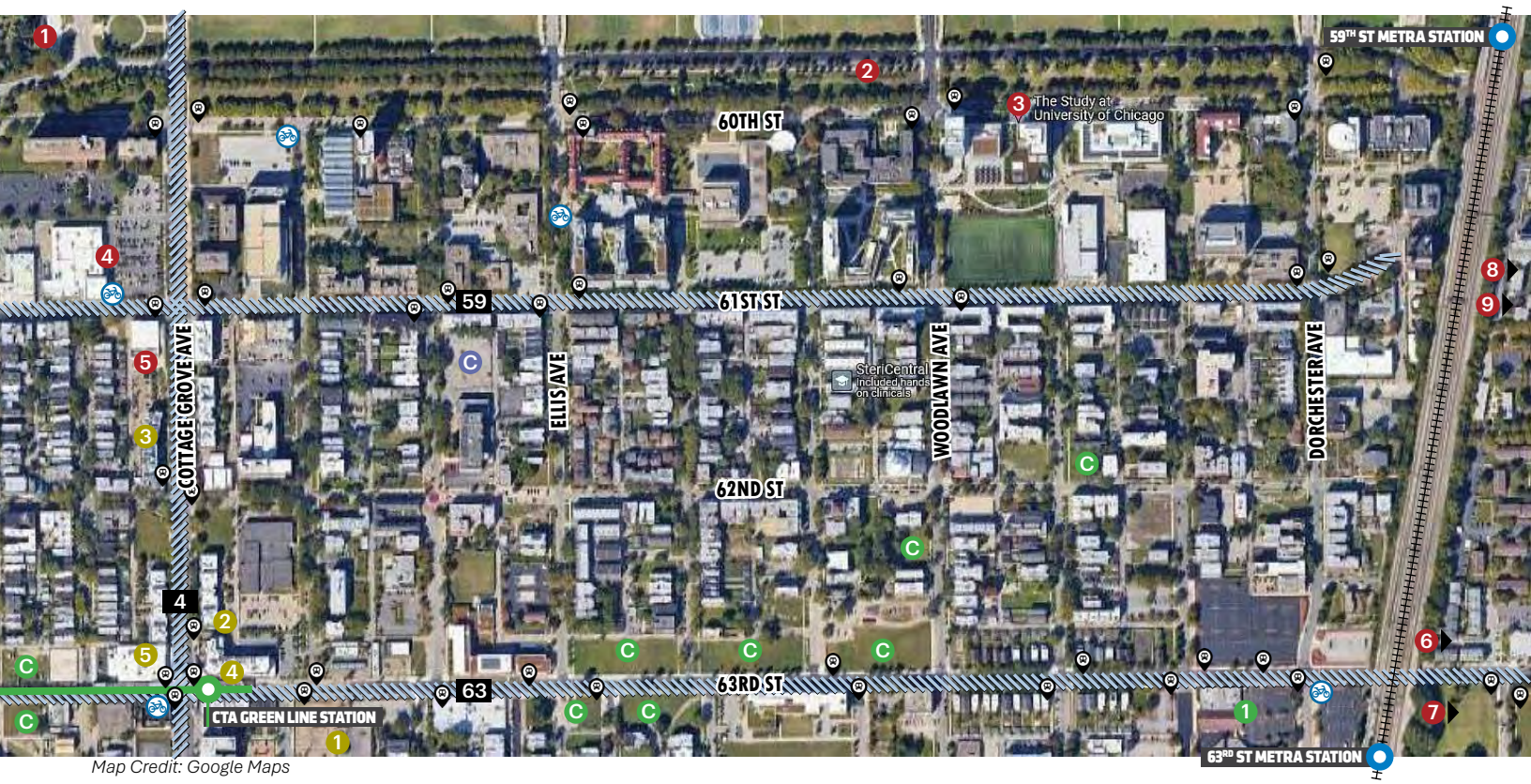
(1) Conceptual rendering of Park Station Lofts; (2) groundbreaking for Park Station Lofts; (3) Jewel-Osco; (4) Woodlawn Station; (5) Woodlawn Health Center





Image Credits: (1) DL3 Realty; (2) UJAMAA Construction; (3) Google Maps; (4) Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH); (5) American Society for Health Care Engineering (ASHE)

CASE STUDY Woodlawn TOD | Woodlawn, Chicago, IL



Map Credit: Google Maps

Activity Generators

1. Washington Park
2. Midway Plaissance
3. University of Chicago
4. Jewel-Osco
5. MetroSquash Youth & Family Center
6. Hyde Park Academy School
7. Mount Carmel High School
8. Obama Presidential Library
9. Jackson Park

Equitable Elements

1. Park Station Lofts
2. Woodlawn Station
3. Burnham at Woodlawn Park
4. Accessible CTA El Station
5. Friend Health Woodlawn Health Center

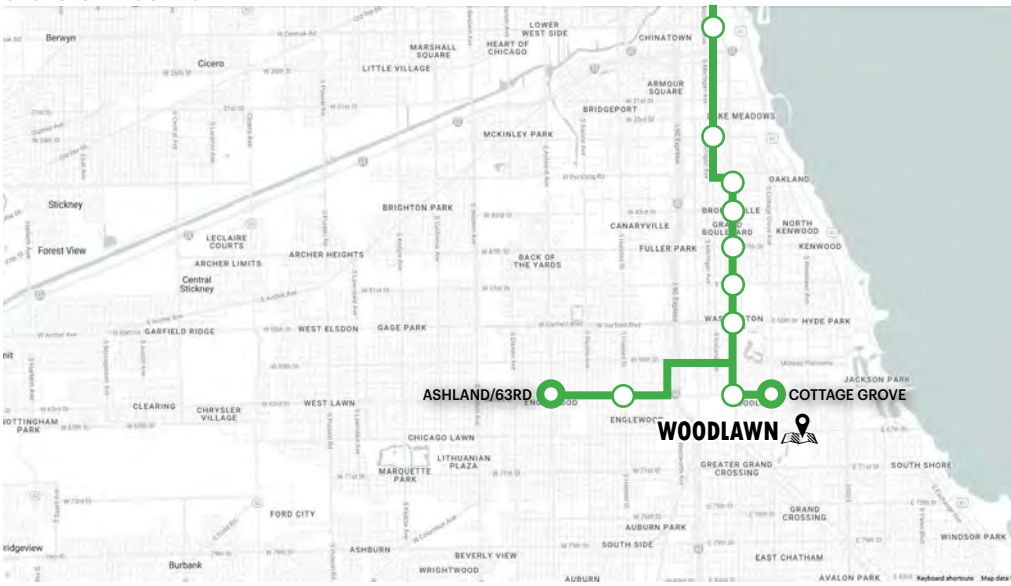
TOD Opportunities

1. Woodlawn Central (POTENTIAL)
C. City-Owned Land

Access Infrastructure

- CTA El Station (COTTAGE GROVE)
- CTA El Line
- CTA Bus Lines (4 COTTAGE GROVE) (59 59TH ST) (63 63RD ST)
- CTA Bus Stops
- Metra Station (59TH ST/UNIV OF CHICAGO) (63RD ST)
- Divvy Bike Share Stations

CASE STUDY LOCATION MAP



Map Credit: Snazzy Maps

CASE STUDY

Lombard Downtown TOD

LOCATION: Lombard, IL (DuPage County)
TRANSIT FACILITY(S): Metra Union Pacific West (UP-W) Line
COMMUNITY TYPE: Suburban

Adopted by the Village Board in 2011, the Downtown Lombard Revitalization Project Guidebook provides strategies and development concepts for multiple sites within the downtown core and along East St. Charles Road. Strategies focused on streetscape and façade improvements, visual identity, wayfinding signage, transportation infrastructure, and TOD around the downtown Metra station. The Village has utilized the guidebook in its planning efforts to advance TOD and downtown revitalization, which has helped to re-establish Downtown Lombard as a dense, mixed use district and activity center.

One key site was the former DuPage Theater property, which sits kitty corner from the Metra station. This site was redeveloped as Lilac Station, which is a four-story, mixed use development fronting two main roads with 118 apartment units, underground parking, and a future restaurant. The site also includes a coffee and pastry shop. Lilac Station benefited from TIF incentives and a performance-based retail sales tax reimbursement. Other downtown efforts include:

- Retail business grant to fund the relocation and expansion of Billy Brick's Pizza, Gnarly Knots, Fringe Salon, and others
- Restaurant forgivable loan for Kyo Ramen and Grove Tavern to remodel existing sites into new food establishments
- Façade improvement grants for multiple downtown storefronts
- ADA accessible parking throughout the downtown, many of which are located within two blocks of the Metra station
- Accessibility improvement grant to restore a vacant business into a new accessible commercial tenant space near the station
- Adaptive reuse of underutilized buildings by Afterthought Brewing Company and Righteous Kitchen
- Pedestrian-friendly plazas along Main Street near the Metra station and a pedestrian underpass connecting Lilac Park to downtown
- Creation of a pedestrian-friendly corridor along South Park Avenue a block from the station to accommodate flexible business space and enhanced programming for downtown special events
- A planned bike trail at the west side of downtown along Elizabeth Street to connect to the regional Great Western Trail
- Utility infrastructure grant to assist with the complete site rehab of Lombard Veterinary Hospital

These projects spur economic development in Downtown Lombard bringing a range of shops, services, and amenities and advancing a more accessible and TOD supportive mixed use district.

STRATEGIES

Tools and approaches used in this case study that can be adapted to other TOD areas

- **Offering incentives:** The Village utilizes a range of grants and funds to support the ongoing revitalization of Downtown Lombard. As one of Lombard's four TIF districts, the Downtown TIF was central to the Lilac Station mixed use TOD project across the street from the Metra station. Other downtown incentives offered by the Village include an improvement and renovation grant, restaurant forgivable loan, retail business grant, and relocation grant.
- **Providing access for all:** In addition to having a fully accessible Metra station, the Village prioritizes the provision of ADA accessible parking throughout downtown, many of which are within two blocks from the station. Downtown building improvement grants also support making sites and structures more accessible.
- **Making readjustments:** While a range of factors impact the implementation of any plan, having a plan in place provides a general framework from which to work and adapt new or modified project ideas that still meet the overall goal of revitalizing downtown and building up around the Metra station. For example, concepts for a bus layover across the street from the Metra station changed to a bank express drive thru that cleaned up an underutilized site with an active use and pedestrian-friendly corner treatments.

(1) Main Street pedestrian plaza by the Metra station; (2) Fringe and Gnarly Knots businesses benefiting from relocation and expansion grants; (3)(4) Lilac Station mixed use development

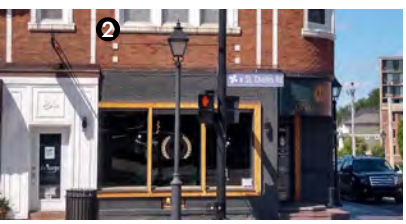
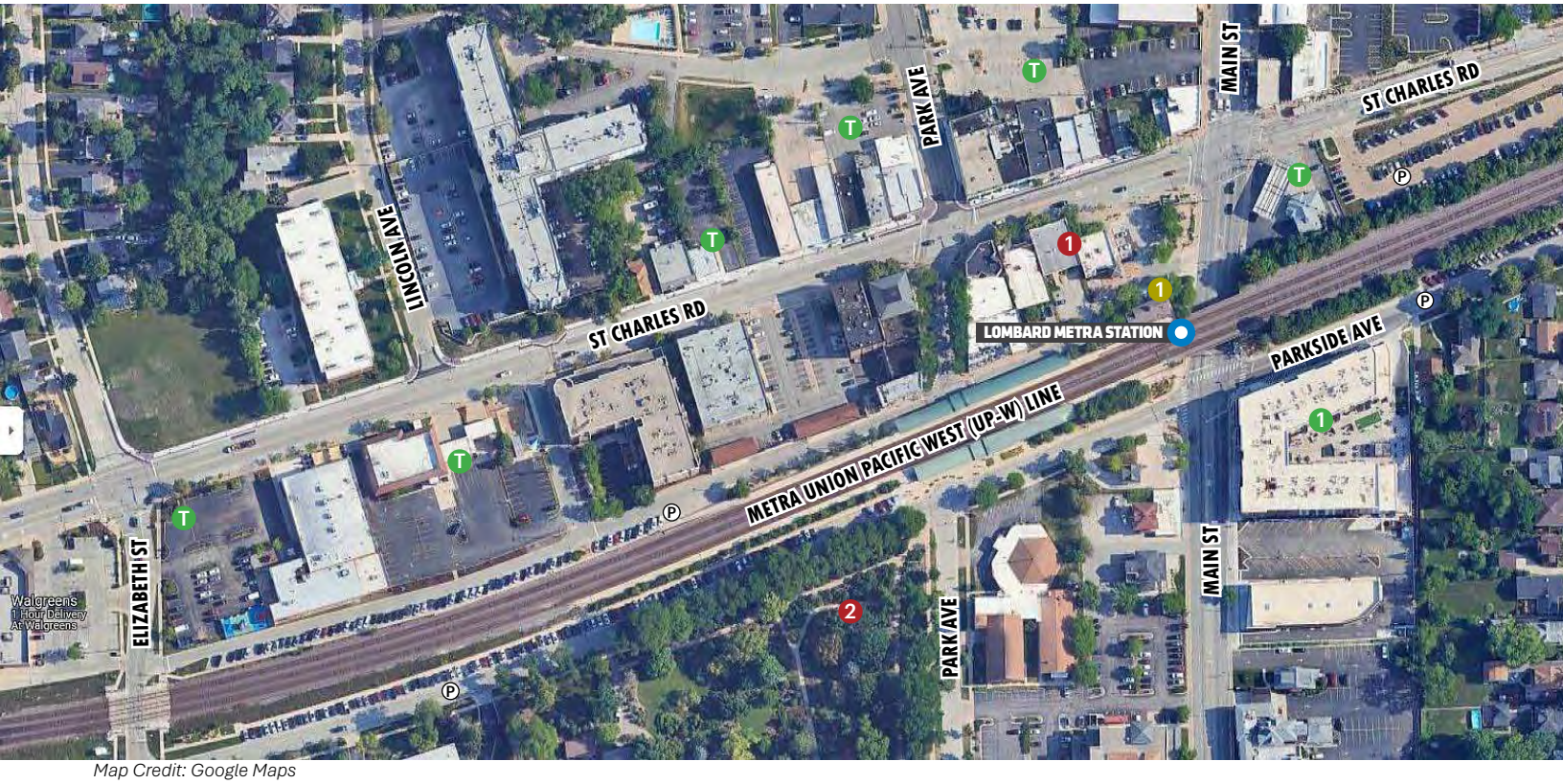



Image Credits: (1) Google Maps; (2) Village of Lombard; (3)(4) Holladay Properties

CASE STUDY Lombard Downtown TOD | Lombard, IL



Map Credit: Google Maps

Activity Generators

1 Downtown Lombard
2 Lilacia Park

Equitable Elements

1 Accessible Metra Station
A Accessible Parking (VARIOUS)

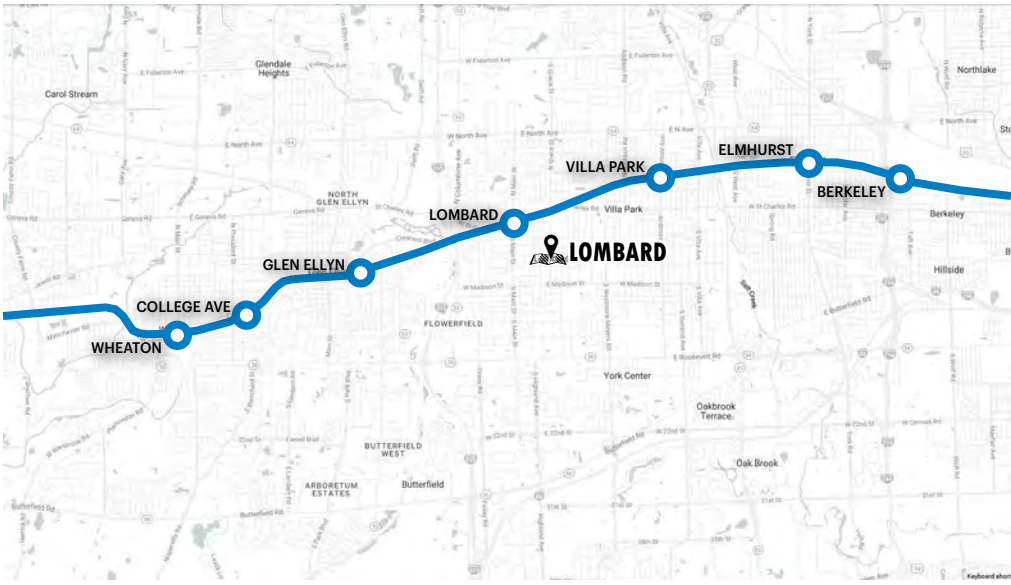
TOD Opportunities

1 Lilac Station
T TOD Plan Opportunity Site (POTENTIAL)

Access Infrastructure

Metra Station (UP-W LOMBARD)
Ⓟ Commuter Parking

CASE STUDY LOCATION MAP



Map Credit: Snazzy Maps

CASE STUDY

Pace Pulse Milwaukee Line

LOCATION: Niles and Chicago, IL (Cook County)
TRANSIT FACILITY(S): Pace Pulse with connectivity to Pace fixed bus, CTA rail and bus, and Metra commuter rail
COMMUNITY TYPE: Suburban and Urban

Serving as Pace's initial Pulse service line, the Pulse Milwaukee Line is the system's first bus rapid transit service that combines transit signal priority technology and limited-stop service with raised platforms at stations to reduce travel times and provide enhanced rider amenities. The Pulse program serves as a strong example of how bus corridors can support TOD, particularly in the way they incorporate many of the same accessibility and land use features like TOD around rail stations.

Launched in 2019, the Pulse Milwaukee Line serves riders along a 7.6 mile stretch between Golf Mill Mall in Niles and the Jefferson Park Transit Center in Chicago with connectivity to various Pace and CTA bus lines, Niles Free Bus, CTA rail, and Metra regional rail. The Pulse station areas vary depending on existing neighborhood contexts and opportunities for TOD. For example, the far north terminus at Golf Mill has the potential to include a reimagined mall into a mixed use town center with revitalized mall areas, additional retail, pedestrian-oriented common areas, 300 apartment units, medical office, and hospitality spaces. Approved by Niles in 2023 with TIF funding, the Golf Mill Town Center is set to begin construction in 2025. In addition to the revitalized mall, the Golf Mill Pulse station will be accessible to a mix of housing, retail and office jobs, and the 10-acre Golf Mill Park, which will include flexible event spaces and recreation for all ages and abilities.

The Pulse stations at Main Street are nestled in a well-established mixed residential neighborhood near parks and schools. In contrast, the station areas south at Oakton Street and Harlem Avenue are located along commercial stretches of Milwaukee Avenue. While they are mostly suburban in character with buildings set back from parking, these bus stations are more inviting to customers and workers. The Pulse station on the east side of Milwaukee at Touhy Avenue is also along a commercial corridor; however, the adjacent CVS and multi-tenant commercial building anchored by Starbucks front right onto Milwaukee with sidewalk access to the Pulse station. This format aligns better with traditional TOD principles. The Pulse station on the west side is accessible to a dense block of condos, apartments, and senior living facilities. This pattern of Pulse stations located within denser mixed use environments continues as the Pulse Line traverses south to the stations at Devon, Austin, Central, and Jefferson Park in Chicago.

While each station area is distinct, they all offer opportunities to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and ADA compliant accessibility. Located in well-established neighborhoods or commercial districts, these station areas would require creative TOD approaches, such as considering redevelopment on reclaimed parking areas, underutilized sites, or reimagined adaptive reuse of malls or commercial centers.

STRATEGIES

Tools and approaches used in this case study that can be adapted to other TOD areas

- **Locating stations strategically:** With two Pulse lines in place along Milwaukee and Dempster, Pace has three corridors (Halsted, 95th Street, and Cermak) in project development stage and five other corridors (Harlem, Touhy, Western, North, and a Halsted extension) on Pace's near-term Pulse priority list. As Pace coordinates these future Pulse lines with municipalities, there is opportunity to strategically identify locations for Pulse stations to ensure they maximize their capacity to enhance TOD and access to transit along the corridors.
- **Closing accessibility gaps:** Safer and more welcoming bus stops along a Pulse line can be further enhanced by taking steps to maximize accessibility to the Pulse station areas. This can be accomplished by linking disconnected sidewalks, providing safer bicycle paths, and ensuring ADA compliance of transportation infrastructure. This is even more significant where Pulse stations are situated in areas that are still predominantly auto-oriented.
- **Thinking outside the box:** Creative approaches to TOD are needed along bus corridors due to the nature of stops being located in established areas. The Chicago region is experiencing a renewed approach to reimagine the reuse of large parking lots, underutilized sites, and declining malls and commercial centers.

(1) Pace Pulse Milwaukee Line station along commercial stretch at Touhy Avenue; (2) redevelopment plan for Golf Mill Town Center at northern terminus of Pulse line

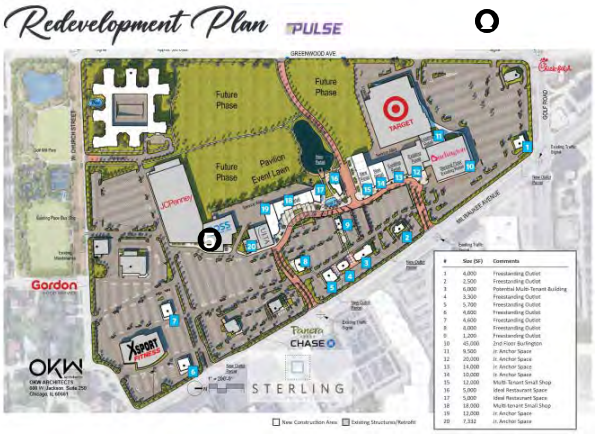


Image Credits: (1) Pace; (2) Village of Niles and OKW Architects

CASE STUDY Pace Pulse Milwaukee Line | Niles and Chicago, IL

Map Credit: Google Maps

Activity Generators

1. Milwaukee Avenue Corridor
2. Niles Police Department
3. Niles Public Works Department
4. Niles Veterans Memorial Waterfall
5. Holiday Inn Express
6. Niles Community Rain Garden
7. Brooks Park

Equitable Elements

- (P) Accessible Pace Pulse Bus Stop

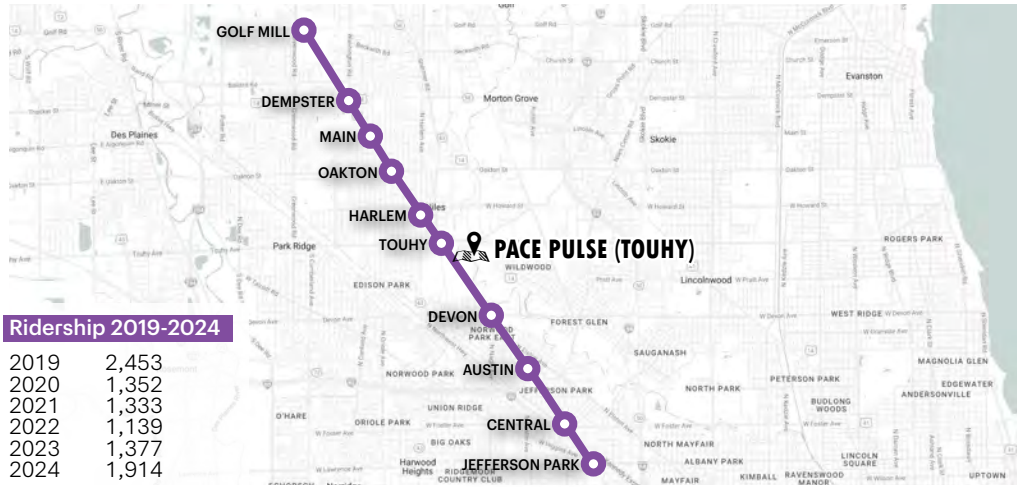
TOD Opportunities

- (B) Bike Access Improvements (POTENTIAL)
- (T) Chicago River North Branch Trail
- (M) Multifamily Housing (CONDOS, APARTMENTS)
- (S) Senior Living Facilities
- (E) Enhanced BRT Station

Access Infrastructure

- Pace Pulse Bus Line (270 MILWAUKEE)
- Pace Pulse Bus Stop
- Pace Bus Line (290 TOUHY)
- Pace Bus Stops

CASE STUDY LOCATION MAP



Ridership 2019-2024

2019	2,453
2020	1,352
2021	1,333
2022	1,139
2023	1,377
2024	1,914

Map Credit: Snazzy Maps

PACE PULSE BRT BUS STOP

Enhanced station amenities are intended to create a safer and more welcoming bus stop environment for transit users:

- Raised platform
- ADA accessibility
- Vertical marker with route map and real-time bus tracker
- Heated shelter with customizable panels for branding and design aesthetics
- Trash receptacles
- Bicycle racks
- Interior lighting
- Landscape treatments

Image Credit: Pace

CASE STUDY

Harlem Avenue Corridor

LOCATION: Multiple communities from Chicago to Bedford Park, IL (Cook County)
TRANSIT FACILITY(S): Pace fixed bus with connectivity to Pace bus, CTA bus and rail, and Metra commuter rail
COMMUNITY TYPE: Suburban and Urban

As one of the busiest and longest corridors in the Chicago region, Harlem Avenue is an exemplar case study of how multiple jurisdictions have continually worked together to develop plans to improve transit access and build up development along a bus corridor. One of the earliest studies for the corridor was the 2011 Harlem Avenue Corridor Plan that was a multijurisdictional effort covering the 15-mile stretch from I-80 in Tinley Park at the south up to 71st Street in Bedford Park at the north. Working with ten municipalities, this plan assessed development opportunity sites and potential transportation improvements to enhance multimodal access and mobility along Harlem Avenue. This stretch of Harlem Avenue is primarily served by Pace bus with linkages to three Metra regional rail stations.

Regional corridor planning continued further north to a ten-mile stretch of Harlem Avenue, this time extending north of Bridgeview up to North Avenue in Chicago as part of the 2018 Central Harlem Avenue Corridor Study. This study was a multijurisdictional project covering fourteen municipalities primarily served by Pace and CTA bus with connections to two CTA rail stations, two Metra commuter rail stations, and Midway International Airport. Today, this segment of Harlem Avenue is currently one of five corridors in the planning phase for the growing Pace Pulse bus rapid transit (BRT) network.

The planning work for this combined stretch of Harlem Avenue from North Avenue in Chicago to I-80 in Tinley Park lays the groundwork for access infrastructure improvements that are critical to enhancing transit access, identifying future Pace Pulse stations, and facilitating TOD along the bus corridor. Access infrastructure improvements include higher visibility crosswalks, safer pedestrian areas in the right-of-way, enhanced pedestrian signals, ADA accessibility, parking access, and intersection improvements.

As listed on the right, various municipalities along Harlem Avenue have taken steps that help make the Harlem Avenue Corridor more transit supportive and facilitate TOD.

Berwyn and Riverside updated their Zoning Codes to be transit supportive, including a focus on future Pace Pulse stations along Harlem Avenue.

Palos Heights improved access to the Pace bus route by providing updated access infrastructure and linkages to a mix of uses nearby.

Forest Park supports mixed use TOD, including the 56-unit Forest Oaks affordable housing multi-family development for older adults that is a block from the CTA Harlem / Lake Green Line station.

Worth's Metra station area includes new townhomes and retail space.

Tinley Park built up office, retail, restaurant, and hotel spaces around the I-80 interchange, including a Pace bus service loop through the North Creek Business Park.

Bridgeview increased residential density with a large condo complex along the bus route north of the Worth Metra Station and close to a major industrial and civic employment center.

STRATEGIES

Tools and approaches used in this case study that can be adapted to other TOD areas

- **Getting zoning codes ready for TOD:** Communities like Berwyn and Riverside have recently updated their zoning codes to make them more supportive of TOD. Other communities like Worth with a TOD plan in place have updated zoning standards to help advance TOD recommendations. Whether there's a development coming down the pipeline or it's just due diligence, the inclusion of transit supportive language in a zoning code update is the type of proactive step municipalities can take at any time to be ready for TOD.
- **Taking advantage of major activity generators:** A major corridor like Harlem Avenue presents opportunities to build up TOD at major activity generators. SeatGeek Stadium is a major regional attraction, particularly with the renewed growth of professional soccer and music festivals, that could support TOD with the Bridgeview Transit Center nearby. North Riverside Mall is another major activity generator that could be reimagined in a mixed use town center concept like Golf Mill Mall in Niles along the Pace Pulse Milwaukee Line. The key is taking advantage of these opportunities to maximize density, mixed use appeal, and transit ridership generation, which requires striking a balance with the draw of their traditionally auto-oriented character.

(1) Pace bus serving over two dozen communities along Harlem Avenue; (2) Pace conceptual bus corridor design guidelines

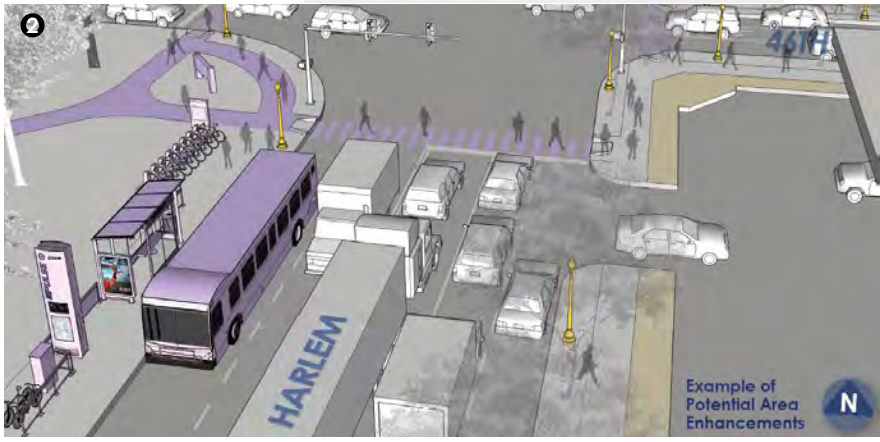
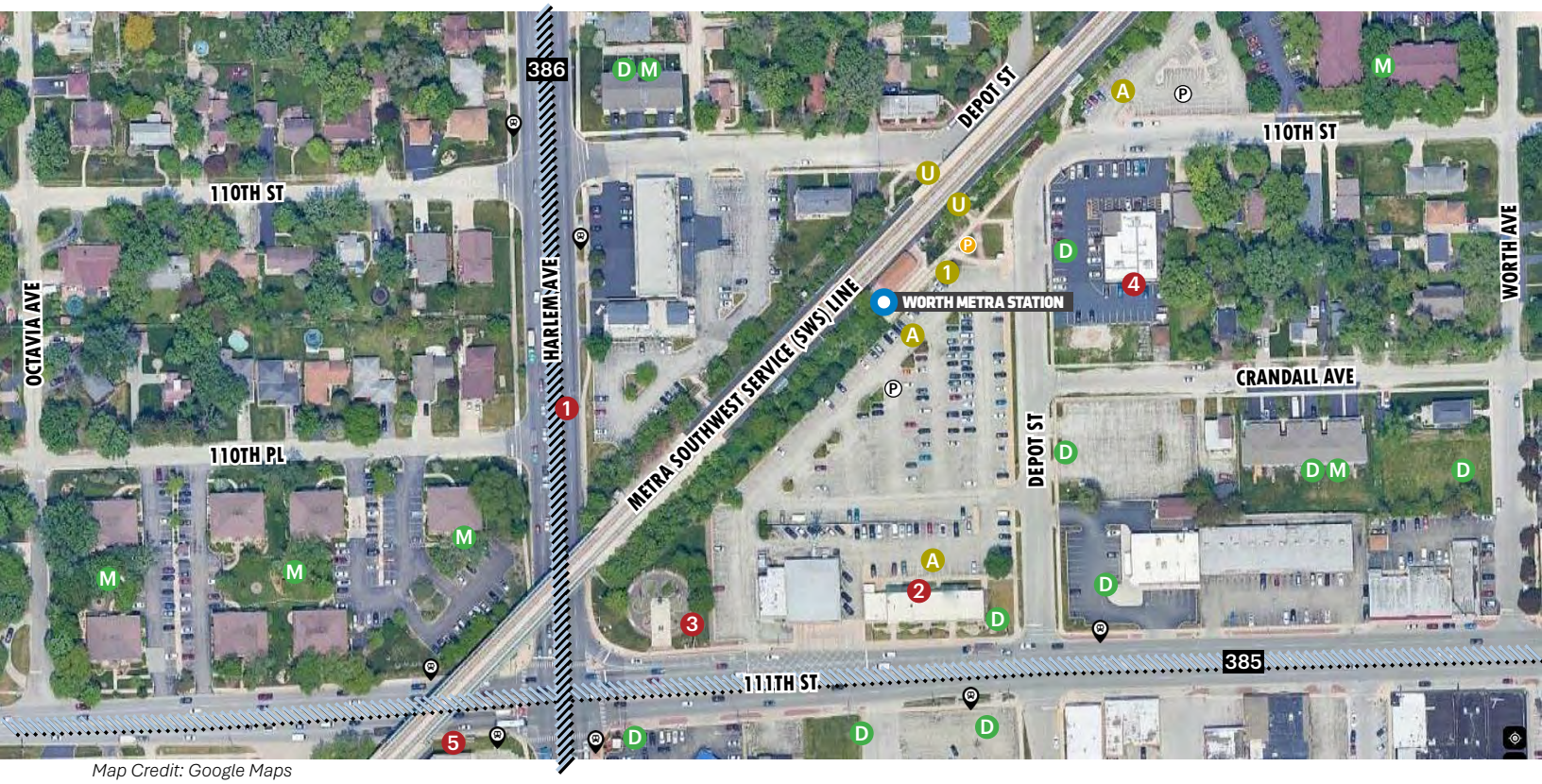


Image Credits: (1) Pace; (2) Pace Transit Supportive Guidelines

CASE STUDY **Harlem Avenue Corridor** | Multiple communities from Chicago to Bedford Park, IL



Map Credit: Google Maps

Activity Generators

1. Harlem Avenue Corridor
2. Worth Village Hall
3. Worth Memorial Plaza
4. American Legion
5. U.S. Post Office

Equitable Elements

- (1) Accessible Metra Station
- (U) Accessible Railroad Underpass
- (A) Accessible Parking (VARIOUS)

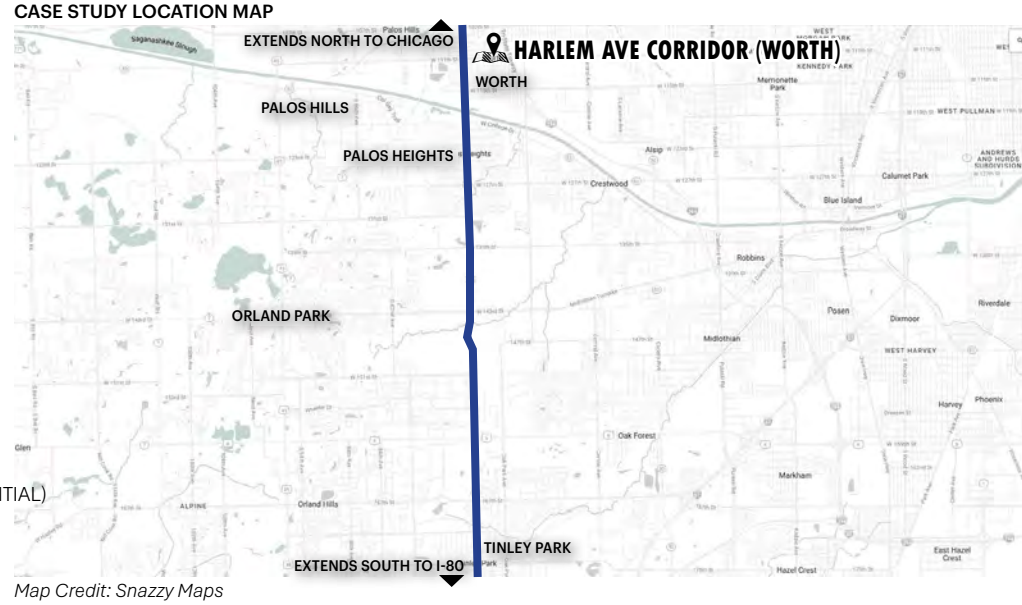
TOD Opportunities

- (M) Multifamily Housing (CONDOS, APARTMENTS)
- (D) TOD Master Plan Development Sites (POTENTIAL)

Access Infrastructure

- Metra Station (SWS WORTH)
- (P) Commuter Parking
- Pace Bus Lines (386 HARLEM) (385 87TH/111TH/127TH)
- Pace Bus Stops
- (P) Bicycle Parking (METRA STATION)

CASE STUDY LOCATION MAP



Map Credit: Snazzy Maps

CASE STUDY

Richton Park TOD

LOCATION: Richton Park, IL (Cook County)
TRANSIT FACILITY(S): Metra Electric (ME) Line and Pace bus
COMMUNITY TYPE: Suburban

Richton Park has a long history of taking steps to improve access to transit and plan for TOD around the Village's Metra station, which is situated near the intersection of its two main roads, Governors Highway and Sauk Trail. Dating back to 2002, Richton Park has utilized RTA grant funding on five separate occasions to guide station area planning, convene a developer discussion panel, and develop pedestrian access and ADA accessibility improvement strategies. Most recently, the construction of proposed crosswalks, sidewalk connectors, and ADA accessibility improvements at the Metra station and along Pace Bus Route #362 proposed in the 2016 Access to Transit Plan have all been completed.

Previous transit access improvements and planning efforts pave the way for the Village's visionary and ambitious plan to create the Richton Park Town Center area, which envisions projects and improvements "to increase the residential density and commercial intensity through substantial new real estate development, [as well as] facilitate pedestrian and rail transportation, create and enhance public amenities, and create a memorable and distinct destination." The Town Center plan includes redeveloping about 50% of the existing commuter parking lots to accommodate new commercial and mixed use development, as well as a new parking structure. This includes a land swap agreement with Metra to redevelop existing parking lots and provide parking replacement.

Infrastructure improvements are already underway for the future Town Center area, including Village work on an extension of Richton Road and flood mitigation plans. The Town Center is also able to leverage past infrastructure improvements, including the 2010 installation of new sidewalks along Governors Highway, a 2011 rail line viaduct beautification project, and a critical brownfield remediation project at Governors Highway and Sauk Trail. These infrastructure improvements lay the groundwork for future TOD.

While some of these infrastructure improvements are located within the public right-of-way, the Village maintains substantial real estate holdings in the area, which enables them to have major influence on how these lands are improved and utilized as part of the overall Town Center development, including the potential to prioritize these properties as initial phase development to jumpstart the TOD vision for the Town Center. Other elements in the Village's control is assembling land and preparing an updated zoning code, design guidelines, and streetscape improvement standards.

STRATEGIES

Tools and approaches used in this case study that can be adapted to other TOD areas

- **Leveraging available funding:** Funding can be leveraged to set the stage for TOD, including access infrastructure, TOD planning, infrastructure improvements, land assembly, etc. Richton Park is a strong example of this, including: securing five separate RTA grants to support TOD planning and access to transit; utilizing funds from the Governors/Sauk TIF to finance improvements, planning, marketing, and redevelopment; and receiving an appropriation to prepare the blueprints for the Town Center's new parking garage.
- **Thinking big:** While many TOD plans identify various sites that can be redeveloped or improved as they piece together to make a larger cohesive whole, cases like the Richton Park Town Center show how a TOD can be part of a major development project that creates a new district or revitalizes an existing one. One lesson about thinking big is to allow space to adapt to changing variables while keeping the overall vision intact.
- **Reclaiming parking:** An emerging trend in TOD is reimagining the use of underutilized parking, particularly as employers modify their in-office work arrangements. This is an effective way to support more viable development. As part of its Town Center plan, Richton Park reimagines underutilized parking areas for a mix of uses that reintroduces parking in more favorable layouts.

(1) Illustrative plan for the future Richton Park Town Center with TOD planned around the Metra station; (2) Richton Park Metra Station; (3) access to transit improvements completed in 2020

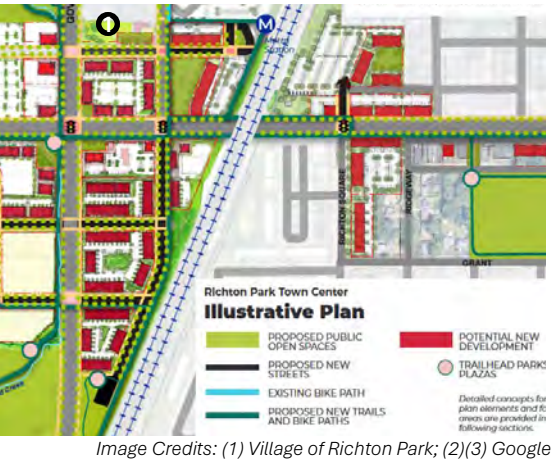
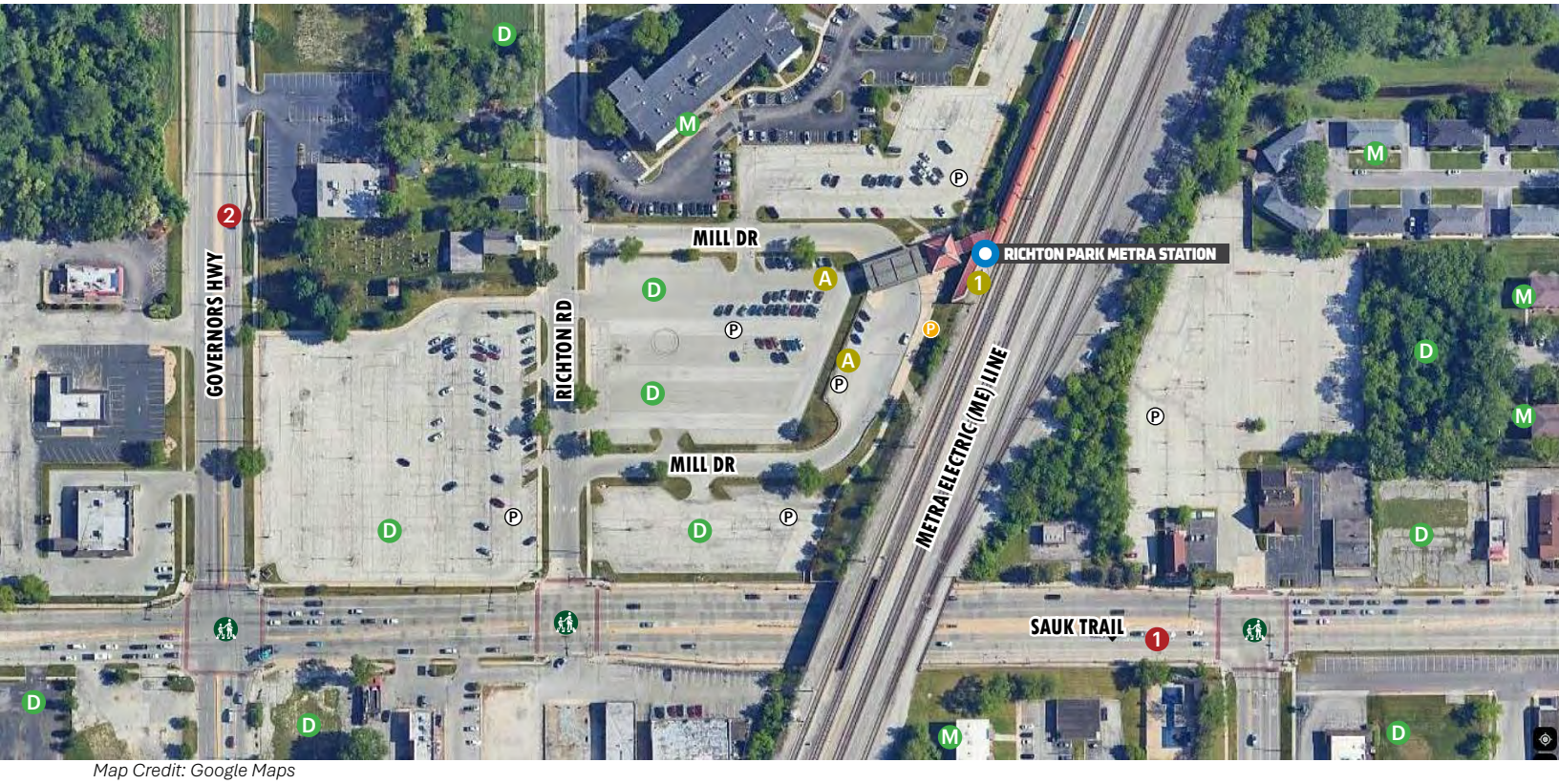


Image Credits: (1) Village of Richton Park; (2)(3) Google Maps

CASE STUDY Richton Park TOD | Richton Park, IL



Map Credit: Google Maps

Activity Generators

1 Sauk Trail Corridor
2 Governors Highway Corridor

Equitable Elements

1 Accessible Metra Station
A Accessible Parking (VARIOUS)

TOD Opportunities

M Multifamily Housing (CONDOS, APARTMENTS)
D Town Center Development Sites (POTENTIAL)

Access Infrastructure

Metra Station (ME RICHTON PARK)
Ⓟ Commuter Parking
Ⓟ Bicycle Parking (METRA STATION)
Access to Transit Infrastructure Improvements

CASE STUDY LOCATION MAP

Map Credit: Snazzy Maps

CASE STUDY

North Quincy Station TOD

LOCATION: Quincy, MA (Metro Boston)
TRANSIT FACILITY(S): MBTA T Red Line train and buses
COMMUNITY TYPE: Urban

Located south of Boston, the City of Quincy, MA, is served by the MBTA with four T Red Line rail stations and multiple bus lines. Quincy has taken various steps throughout the past two decades to take a focused approach to development around the four local rail stations.

The Quincy Center station is situated at the core of the City, which has historically developed as a traditional dense downtown district with a mix of housing, businesses, services, and civic uses. In 2013, the City coordinated with Boston's Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to create a TOD plan for the Wollaston station, which included strategies like creating a TOD overlay district, making pedestrian improvements, and reducing lot sizes, setbacks, and residential parking requirements, among other recommendations.

The City has continued its efforts to coordinate TOD projects around the North Quincy and Quincy Adams stations, particularly in conjunction with the City Council's 2023 adoption of an ordinance designating these two station areas as MBTA Community Multi-Family Overlay Districts. In coordination with 2022 legislation enacted by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, this groundbreaking ordinance requires at least one zoning district of reasonable size to allow multi-family housing as a permitted use as of right within a ½-mile of transit, along with other criteria regarding minimum gross density, no age restrictions, and suitability for families with children.

This ordinance is envisioned to inspire future TOD projects that will follow in the footsteps of the North Quincy Station TOD, which was a City led effort to redevelop a former seven-acre parking lot at the North Quincy station into a mixed-use retail and residential community. Breaking ground in 2016, the North Quincy Station TOD project provides a vibrant, transit-rich development with apartments, retail, commuter parking, and pedestrian and bike lane improvements adjacent to one of Quincy's four major transit hubs. In total, the City's 2023 multi-family TOD ordinance has the capacity to provide 2,935 additional units on 27 acres, equating to a net density of 95.1 du/ac. North Quincy Station serves as a model for similar TODs on other MBTA properties to generate significant revenue from rents for the transit agency over the life of its 99-year lease agreement.

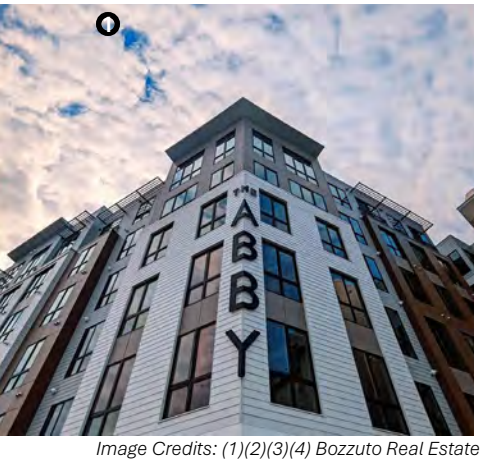
From an ETOD standpoint, the innovative 2022 state law holds the potential to be part of the solution to the housing crisis, particularly utilizing density around transit to build up the housing stock locally and regionally. Quincy also got an early jump on ETOD when it took the proactive step of rehabbing all four of its T stations to ensure ADA compliance after the federal act was enacted in 1990.

STRATEGIES

Tools and approaches used in this case study that can be adapted to other TOD areas

- **Formalizing actions into policy:** Quincy was one of the first municipalities in Massachusetts to leverage the Commonwealth's 2022 legislation to require multi-family housing as a permitted use as of right around transit into its own city ordinance. By formalizing such policy, the City signals its commitment to supporting TOD and building up the local housing supply through dense development around its four rail stations.
- **Addressing the housing crisis:** While the housing crisis won't be solved by one single action, Quincy established city policy to leverage density around TODs to maximize the amount of residential units to build up the local housing stock. The Abby, which is the core mixed use development for the North Quincy Station TOD, committed $4.8M to the City's Affordable Housing Trust benefiting low- and moderate-income households with affordable rental and homeownership opportunities.
- **Repurposing parking lots:** Quincy is one example of a community reclaiming a portion of an oversupply of parking to provide land for TOD, as they did with utilizing a seven-acre parking lot for the North Quincy Station TOD mixed use project. Municipal or transit agency ownership of parking lots can help alleviate complexities when pursing parking lot redevelopment.

The Abby mixed use development at North Quincy Station: (1) five stories of apartments; (2) direct access to the MBTA T Red Line; (3) Target and Starbucks ground floor retail; (4) streetscape site view



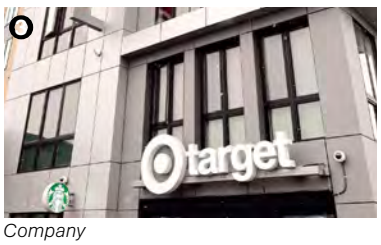
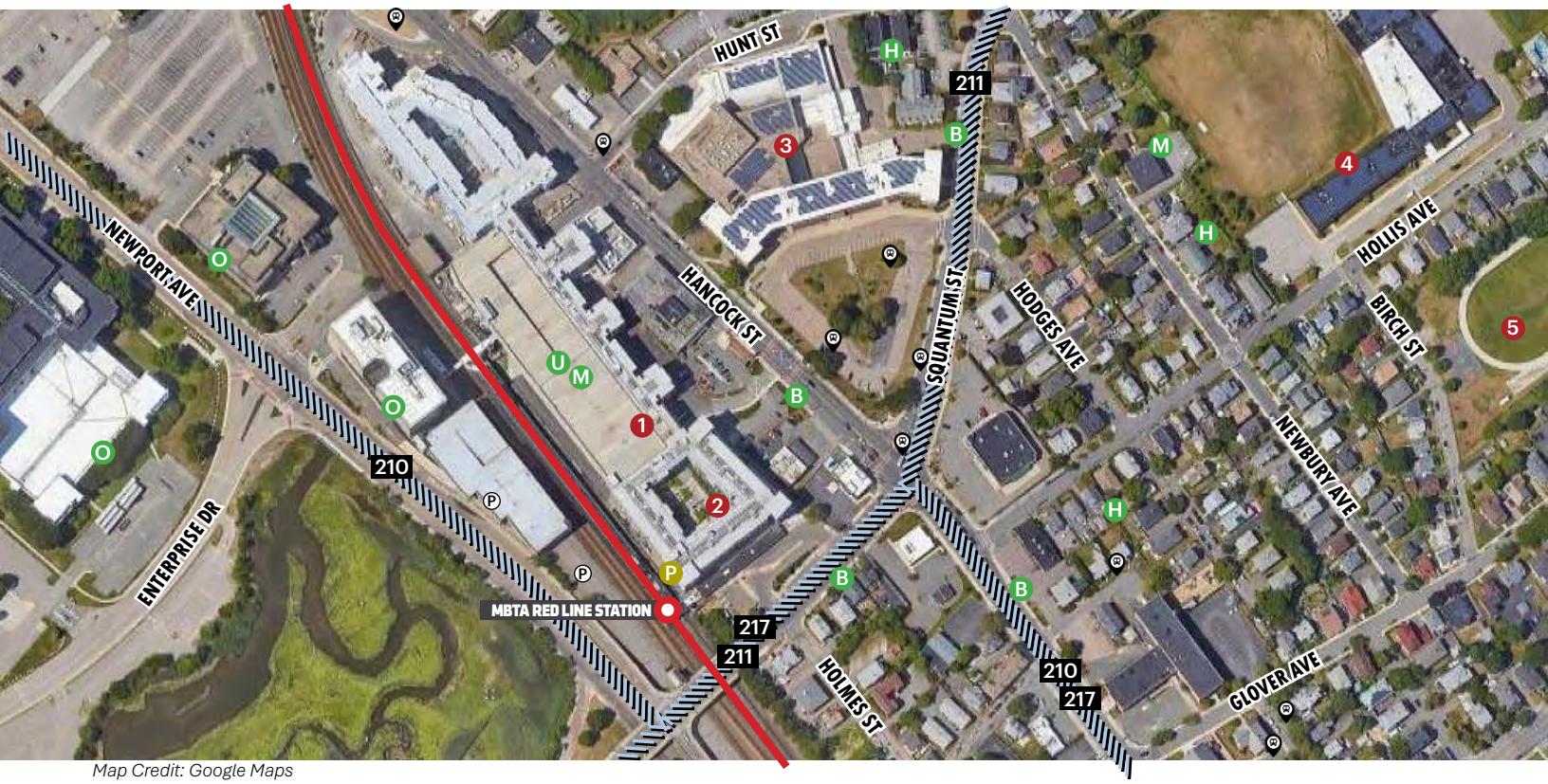


Image Credits: (1)(2)(3)(4) Bozzuto Real Estate Company

CASE STUDY North Quincy Station TOD | Quincy, MA (Metro Boston)



Map Credit: Google Maps

Activity Generators

1. North Quincy Station
2. Target
3. North Quincy High School
4. Atlantic Middle School
5. Cavanagh Stadium

Equitable Elements

- (P) Accessible MBTA Station

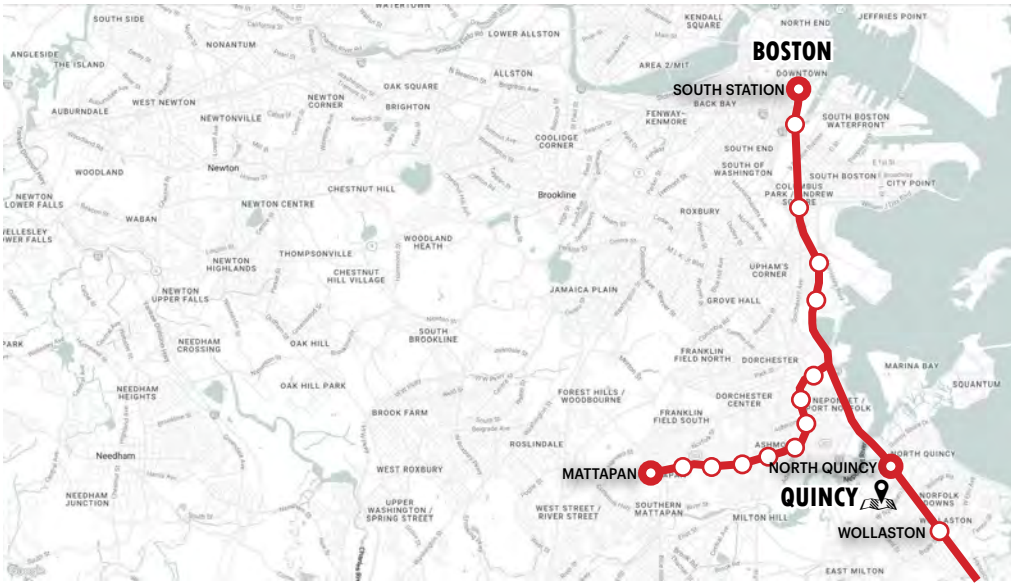
TOD Opportunities

- (B) Bike Access Improvements (POTENTIAL)
- (U) Mixed Use Development
- (M) Multifamily Housing (CONDOS, APARTMENTS)
- (H) Missing Middle Housing (DUPLEX, TRIPLEX)
- (O) Office Building (EMPLOYMENT)

Access Infrastructure

- MBTA T Station (NORTH QUINCY)
- MBTA T Line
- MBTA Bus Lines (210 FIELDS CORNER STATION) (211 SQUANTUM) (217 ASHMONT STATION)
- MBTA Bus Stops
- (P) Commuter Parking

CASE STUDY LOCATION MAP



Map Credit: Snazzy Maps

CASE STUDY

Harrison Station Area TOD

LOCATION: Harrison, NY (Hudson Valley)
TRANSIT FACILITY(S): MTA commuter rail (Metro-North Line); Westchester County Bee-Line bus
COMMUNITY TYPE: Suburban

The MTA broke ground in August 2023 in suburban Westchester County, NY -- which is north of Manhattan and near the New York/ Connecticut state line -- for the new Avalon Harrison TOD project around the Metro-North Railroad Harrison Station. The Harrison Station TOD serves as an example of developing under-utilized commuter parking. By allowing construction on a former MTA parking lot adjacent to the rail station, the TOD will provide 143 apartments (seven affordable units) and 27,000 sq ft of street-level retail space, enhance the existing main street with new wayfinding and expanded pedestrian right-of-way, maintain an appropriate level of parking in garages, and create new plazas with attentive placemaking details.

Built with support from the MTA, the Avalon Harrison TOD is meant to support downtown revitalization, improve the environment, and promote healthy lifestyles by providing residents with access to shops, amenities, and transit within walking distance. The project is also intended to demonstrate the net gains of redeveloping a single-use lot devoted solely to parking into a mixed use development with housing, retail, and public spaces that reintegrates parking into the site. In particular, the former commuter parking lot provided 257 parking spaces, which made way for 758 new total parking spaces with 475 devoted to MTA transit riders (a net 85% increase in parking for commuters alone).

As part of the Regional Plan Association's (RPA) Homes on Track initiative, the Harrison Station TOD is one of the 96 station areas evaluated by the RPA to advocate for regulatory changes that would support more housing near transit, particularly through minor investments and new regulations that could catalyze TOD potential in the near-term, with an additional 133 station areas identified in the mid-term. Characterization of station areas as near-, mid-, and long-term enables the RPA to work with communities to assess the level of support needed to make each station area fully transit-oriented. They can also identify any regulatory changes that may be needed to facilitate more housing near transit.

Typical physical investments identified by the RPA's Homes on Track initiative include roadway and streetscape improvements, signage, safe pedestrian rail crossings, and station improvements. Longer-term physical investments primarily focus on large-scale infrastructure improvements like structured parking, stormwater management, and utilities. Regulatory measures focus on updating zoning codes, re-evaluating parking requirements, and providing development incentives such as density bonuses and expedited permitting.

STRATEGIES

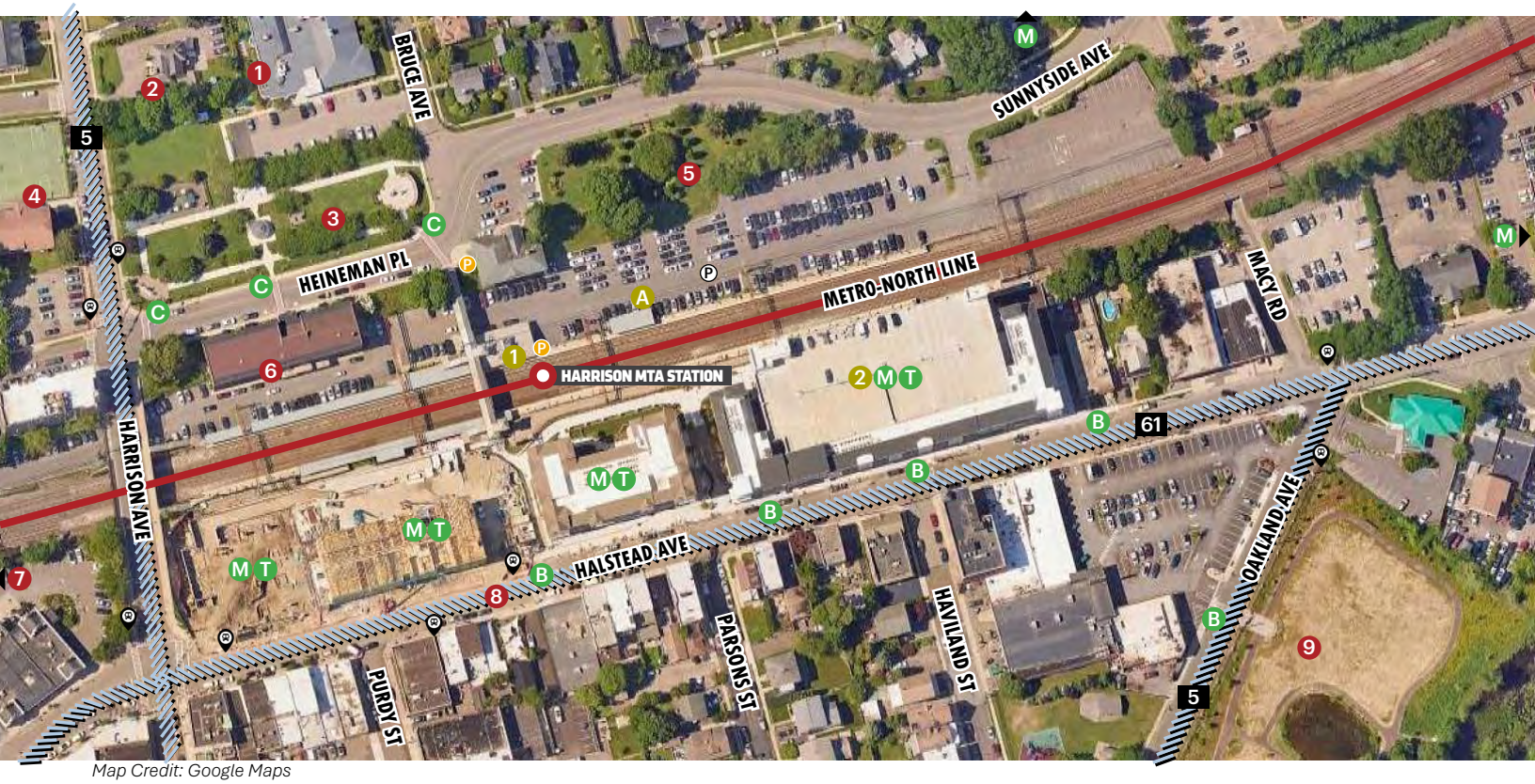
Tools and approaches used in this case study that can be adapted to other TOD areas

- **Getting more bang for your buck:** Underutilized sites can provide more value contributing to TOD than being a single-use lot that is either past its prime or no longer viable. Harrison redeveloped a former commuter parking lot into a mixed use TOD with housing, retail, community spaces, and a net gain in total new parking spaces.
- **Planning regionally, applying locally:** The Avalon Harrison mixed use TOD serves as a major accomplishment for the city and the RPA that has been collaborating with communities to advance TOD across the Hudson Valley. The RPA's Homes on Track initiative created a framework to guide investments, physical improvements, and regulatory interventions to support TOD. As the Harrison Station Area TOD showed, this regional framework is adaptable to local contexts to make TOD happen.
- **Centering housing:** The RPA's Homes on Track initiative finds success by centering housing as the core piece of TOD. Market analyses will often point to the need for rooftops to support new businesses and employment centers, particularly in mixed use environments. Building TOD around housing also makes sense as a means to leverage TOD to provide viable solutions to the national housing crisis at a local level, including affordable and workforce housing options.

(1) Birdseye view of the Harrison Station TOD area, including the new mixed use developments along the MTA Metro-North Line; (2)(3) views of the Avalon Harrison mixed use development

Image Credits: (1) Google Earth; (2)(3) AvalonBay Communities

CASE STUDY Harrison Station Area TOD | Harrison, NY (Hudson Valley)



Map Credit: Google Maps

Activity Generators

1. Harrison Public Library
2. Westchester Jewish Community Services
3. Riis Park
4. Harrison Recreation Department
5. Amelia Earhart Memorial
6. Harrison Town Hall
7. U.S. Post Office
8. Halstead Avenue Corridor
9. Malfitano Park

Equitable Elements

- 1 Accessible Metro Station
- 2 Avalon Harrison TOD (AFFORDABLE UNITS)
- A Accessible Parking (VARIOUS)

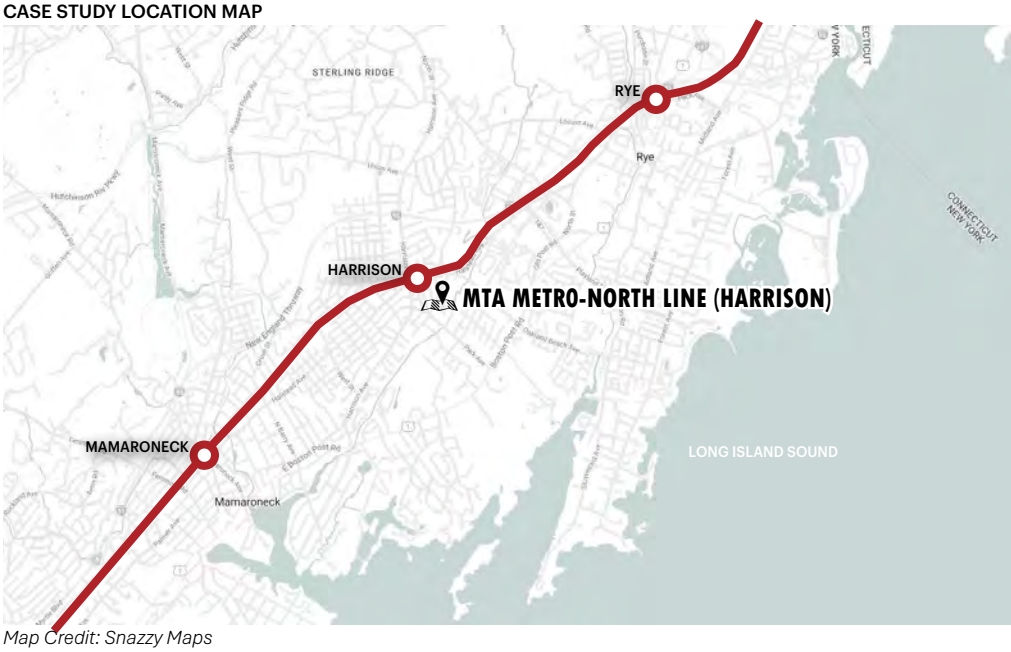
TOD Opportunities

- M Multifamily Housing (CONDOS, APARTMENTS)
- T Residential/Commercial Mixed Use TOD
- C Enhanced Crosswalk Design
- B Mid-Block Crosswalks

Access Infrastructure

- MTA Metro Station (HARRISON)
- MTA Metro-North Line
- MTA Bus Lines (5 BUS) (61 BUS)
- MTA Bus Stops
- Ⓟ Commuter Parking
- Ⓟ Bicycle Parking (METRA STATION)

CASE STUDY LOCATION MAP



Map Credit: Snazzy Maps

CASE STUDY

St. Paul University Avenue Light Rail

LOCATION: St. Paul, MN
TRANSIT FACILITY(S): Metro Transit Green Line light rail transit (LRT)
COMMUNITY TYPE: Urban

Metro Transit opened their light rail transit (LRT) network in 2004, with gradual expansion in the mid 2010s including the 2014 opening of the Green Line that covers 11 miles of LRT connecting Downtown St. Paul to Downtown Minneapolis. The Green Line primarily runs along University Avenue with service to the Minnesota State Capitol, the Midway area in St. Paul, and the University of Minnesota.

The expansion in the 2010s included a greater focus on equity in transit access and TOD, which is of particular importance along University Avenue, as the Green Line touches upon this corridor that has a strong presence of ethnic businesses representing a variety of cultures, particularly Southeast Asian communities like Hmong, Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian. There was additional gravity to bringing the Green Line along University Avenue as it had the potential to displace existing immigrant communities that called the corridor home and built up its multicultural identity. As a result, equity advocates in St. Paul organized to ensure that the Green Line along University Avenue included stops that served these communities and other low-income neighborhoods along the line.

Metro Transit actively supports efforts to bring TOD to life along the Green Line and its other LRT and bus lines. Metro Transit's TOD Office coordinates with the Metropolitan Council, which is the Twin Cities regional policy agency, to implement their TOD Policy by facilitating development on land owned by the Metropolitan Council. In particular, the TOD Office completed a development site prioritization process regarding all properties owned by the Metropolitan Council that are located within a half-mile of a transit facility or corridor. One of these properties is a 1.66-acre site next to the Green Line's Central Station that is envisioned to be developed with high density mixed use development, with developer selection anticipated in Fall 2024.

Affordable housing has also been a part of the mix of TOD projects that have developed since the Green Line expansion, including 2,375 long-term subsidized affordable units within the first five years. This included preserving three of four existing affordable units to maintain long-term affordability along the transit line. Roughly 20% of total housing units along the Green Line are designated as affordable to households earning up to 60% of area median income (AMI). Some of the affordable housing developments along the Green Line include: the Brownstone Lofts (35 workforce housing units above office and retail space); Morrow Apartments (279 workforce housing units constructed with LIHTC requiring affordable rents to low-income residents); and Stadium Village Flats (125 university student units).

STRATEGIES

Tools and approaches used in this case study that can be adapted to other TOD areas

- **Respecting existing businesses:** With TOD construction and site improvements often come impacts on existing businesses, such as temporary or permanent loss of visibility, parking, foot traffic, etc. Proactive measures should be taken to minimize impacts on existing businesses, even if a certain level of inconvenience or disruption is unavoidable due to the nature of construction.
- **Fighting displacement:** To combat the potential reality of permanent displacement due to gentrification, it is imperative to proactively collaborate with local community leaders and organizations that advocate for existing residents and businesses, particularly in neighborhoods with significant representation by low income residents, immigrants, people of color, and other marginalized groups. This includes providing community-based groups to have a seat at the table to be more involved with planning and development.
- **Coordinating with property owners:** Ongoing coordination with owners of vacant or underutilized land is a significant step to pursue potential TOD on these sites that have a relatively clearer path to development. Municipally owned land is a common type to pursue, but there are also unique property owners like universities, healthcare systems, and non-profit agencies.

(1) Metro Green Line light rail passing one of several institutions across the Twin Cities; (2) bike-friendly access on the Green Line; (3) TOD emerging along University Avenue in Frogtown

Image Credits: (1) C.S. McCrossan Civil General Contractor; (2) Visit St. Paul Convention and Visitors Bureau; (3) Google Maps

CASE STUDY University Avenue Light Rail ETOD | St. Paul, MN

Map Credit: Google Maps

Activity Generators

1. St. Paul Fellowship Church
2. Neighborhood Parklet
3. Victoria Theater Arts Center
4. African Grocer
5. Filipino Grocer
6. O'Ryan Event Center
7. Mino Oski Ain Dah Yung Center (COMMUNITY SERVICES, SUPPORTIVE HOUSING)

Equitable Elements

1. Accessible Metro LRT Station
2. Brownstone Lofts (WORKFORCE HOUSING)

TOD Opportunities

- T Residential/Commercial Mixed Use TOD
- C Enhanced Crosswalk Design
- E Enhanced LRT Station

Access Infrastructure

- Metro Green Line LRT Station (VICTORIA ST)
- Metro Green Line LRT Line
- Metro Green Line LRT Bus Stop
- Bicycle Parking
- Dedicated Bike Path

CASE STUDY LOCATION MAP

Map Credit: Metro Transit

METRO LRT BUS STOP

Image Credit: Minnesota Public Radio

CASE STUDY

Indianapolis IndyGo BRT

LOCATION: Indianapolis, IN
TRANSIT FACILITY(S): IndyGo BRT along the Red and Purple Line; future BRT service along the Blue Line
COMMUNITY TYPE: Urban and Suburban

IndyGo, which is Indiana's largest public transit service provider, has prioritized the planning and creation of its bus rapid transit (BRT) network since the mid 2000s, including a 2016 referendum for a 0.25% income tax increase to improve public transportation service in Marion County and 2021 passage of TOD Proposal 178 to implement a TOD overlay district promoting housing diversity and enhanced walkability.

The core result of these efforts was IndyGo's opening of its bus rapid transit (BRT) network, starting with the 13-mile electric Red Line BRT in 2019. As the first fixed-route transit service in Indianapolis since the streetcar closed in 1953, the Red Line BRT is partly intended to increase residential density and attract a skilled workforce along the line linking neighborhoods to major work centers, universities, and downtown.

To expand the BRT system, there is ongoing work with construction of the 15-mile Purple Line BRT, which is scheduled to open in 2024. In addition, design phase work for the 24-mile Blue Line BRT continues with construction anticipated to start in 2025 and opening expected in 2027. The Purple Line will connect Indianapolis to suburban Lawrence, while the Blue Line will link to Indianapolis International Airport.

To prepare for the 2019 opening of the Red Line BRT, IndyGo and its partners utilized federal FTA grants and city funding to invest in enhancing transit, pedestrian, and bike infrastructure, including: upgraded sidewalks, enhanced crosswalks, ADA curb ramps, new bike lanes, bike racks, multi-use paths, and 34 BRT bus station platforms. The Purple and Blue Lines are focusing efforts to provide a similar slate of transit access and pedestrian-/bike-friendly infrastructure. This focus on building up multimodal access to transit at the front end sets the stage for attracting investment and development interest for TOD. Access infrastructure is critically important when integrating BRT stations in existing neighborhoods, particularly to ensure the stations properly connect with adjacent sidewalks and reduce multimodal conflicts within the right-of-way (see bottom right image).

In addition to physical infrastructure, IndyGo's public outreach approach has been a crucial element in preparing Indianapolis for BRT and TOD, particularly helping to educate skeptics among public officials and the general community. This includes a community toolkit that provides informational resources, signage, weekly virtual office hours, and a construction comment form, which was central to the Red Line construction phase and the ongoing and future construction phases for the Purple Line and Blue Line, respectively.

STRATEGIES

Tools and approaches used in this case study that can be adapted to other TOD areas

- **Getting access infrastructure in place:** For a relatively new network like the IndyGo BRT system, the transit agency, city, and other partners coordinated their efforts to establish access infrastructure to ensure people can safely and conveniently navigate a transit oriented neighborhood or district, even before major TOD projects break ground. Taking a proactive approach to getting access infrastructure ready pays dividends for current and future residents, workers, and visitors.
- **Educating the public:** Like any major investment or development, there will be a subset of the community in opposition. However, with every argument is an effective counterargument backed up with facts and data regarding the benefits of transit. A strong public education effort will go a long way to inform opponents and skeptics with the hope to find common ground and garner support in an equitable manner.
- **Standing together with one voice:** Community organizing is deeply rooted in the collaboration of multiple organizations and interest groups to collectively raise up support for a certain issue with a unified voice. Transit advocates in Indianapolis banded together with labor, environmental, and social justice groups to advocate for equitable transit access through expanded BRT across the city and out into the region.

(1) Pedestrian view of a typical IndyGo Red Line bus station; (2) pedestrian night view of a Red Line bus station illustrating connectivity to the surrounding neighborhood

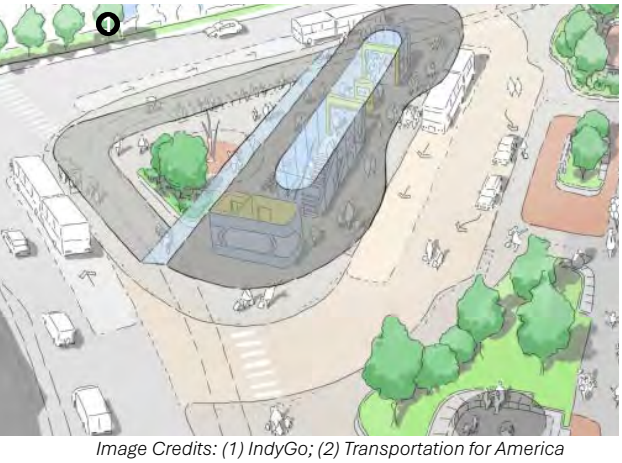


Image Credits: (1) IndyGo; (2) Transportation for America

CASE STUDY Indianapolis Bus Corridor | Indianapolis, IN

Map Credit: Google Maps

Activity Generators

1. Ruth Lilly Library
2. Indianapolis Art Center
3. Efroymson Riverfront Garden
4. Opti-Park Indianapolis
5. Monon Trail

Equitable Elements

1. Accessible IndyGo BRT Station

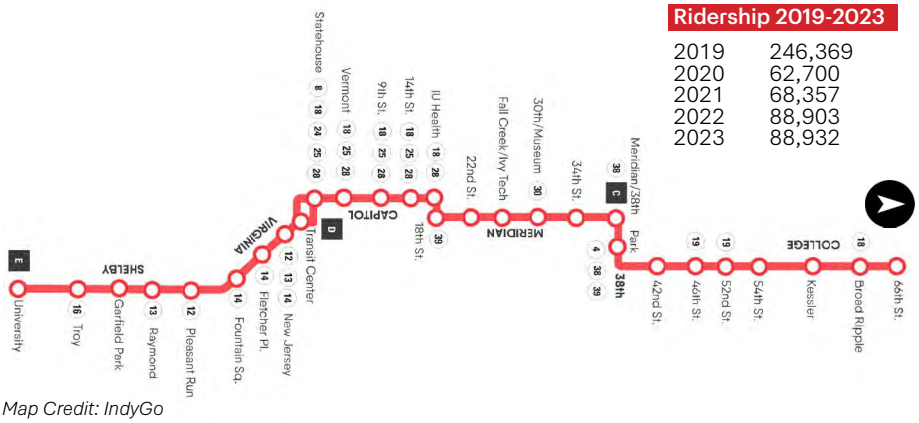
TOD Opportunities

- M Multifamily Housing (CONDOS, APARTMENTS)
- E Enhanced BRT Station
- T Monon Trail

Access Infrastructure

- Pace Pulse Bus Line (270 MILWAUKEE)
- IndyGo Red Line BRT Station (66TH ST)
- IndyGo Red Line BRT Bus Stop
- Bicycle Parking

CASE STUDY LOCATION MAP



Map Credit: IndyGo

INDYGO BRT BUS STOP

Image Credit: Google Maps

9. Implementation

This chapter provides a guide for implementing the policies and tools described throughout this document. Helping your community become more transit-friendly has many benefits—from improving safety to increasing housing options to supporting local businesses and the tax base—but takes time and will happen with incremental changes.

The steps outlined in the implementation checklist (pages 132-134) can be implemented over both a short-term and longer-term horizon. The order in which actions should be pursued will vary depending on your community's specific needs and priorities.

Assess Current Plans and Policies

Having up-to-date plans and policies is fundamental for ETOD. Developers seek predictability in the approval process in order to take the risk in assembling land and proposing a development project. This is especially true for projects with components such as affordable housing units, greater sustainability measures beyond local codes, or increased transportation amenities. If the development team does not know what is possible or what the community is open to, it will be difficult to obtain financing and not worth the risk to invest several months or more seeking approval for a project that may ultimately not be approved.

Ensuring that plans are up-to-date is also beneficial to the community. Engagement that is done as part of an overall planning process provides more predictability for the community to understand what can be built and how it meets broader goals and needs. Education on ETOD principles is much easier to do as part of a proactive, holistic process, rather than as reactive to a specific development proposal.

As a general guideline, comprehensive plans should be updated every 5-10 years. More specific plans, such as ETOD, business district, or corridor plans may need to be updated more frequently as market conditions change.

Update Zoning & Development Review Processes

Once a plan is created or updated, it is essential to update the zoning code to be consistent. This provides a clearer path to developers of what the community would like to see developed and can attract a wider array of interest in the transit area.

As discussed in earlier sections, make sure your zoning code addresses key concepts of ETOD:

- Are your parking standards consistent with ETOD principles, meaning there are low- or no-minimum parking requirements for development?
- Are height and bulk regulations sufficient to facilitate the types of compact development that creates a walkable, transit-friendly environment?
- Do your zoning districts around transit allow for a vertical and horizontal mix of uses, including multi-family residential, commercial, and institutional uses?

Finally, make your process as predictable and streamlined as possible. If your process is straightforward and developers understand what they can expect, you are more likely to attract desired development proposals.

IMPLEMENTATION SPOTLIGHT: Connected Communities Ordinance

Support for ETOD can take many forms, particularly to ensure that projects not only get completed but also respect the neighborhoods and existing communities into which such development will be integrated. Officially adopted policies at the state, county, and municipal levels are a surefire way to plan, design, and build projects that genuinely advance equitable, healthy, and sustainable development around transit.

The City of Chicago's ETOD Policy Plan is being implemented in various initiatives, including: adding ETOD components to the existing Affordable Requirements Ordinance (ARO); designating 11 ETOD pilot sites around Chicago; and providing funding and technical assistance resources to the pilot sites. This included a $800M commitment from the City's Department of Housing to advance 18 ETOD projects.

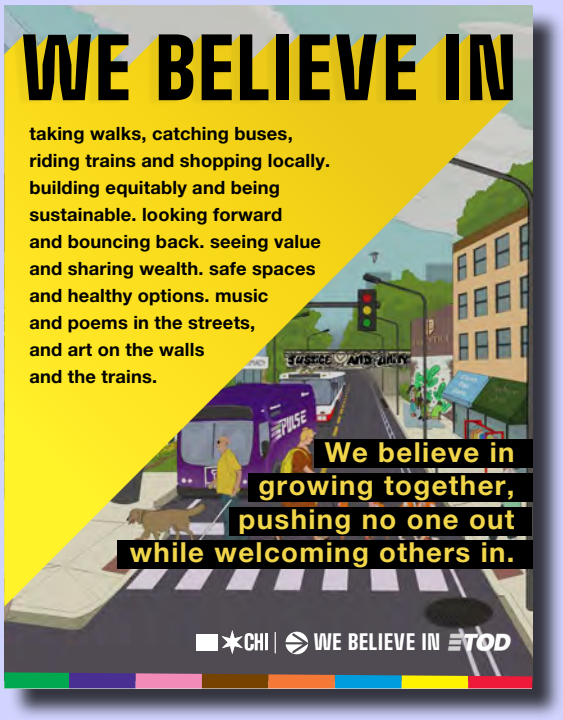
To advance many of the development recommendations from the ETOD Policy Plan, the City developed the Connected Communities Ordinance centering equity and creating incentives that adapted to the varying needs of Chicago's diverse neighborhoods and corridors. City Council approved the Connected Communities Ordinance in July 2022.

The Connected Communities Ordinance has three primary aims to ensure: (1) more neighborhoods are affordable, walkable, and transit- and pedestrian-centered; (2) healthier and safer streets and corridors; and (3) neighborhoods offer more housing options designed with community members to meet their specific needs. Key highlights of the Connected Communities Ordinance are summarized below.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

For ETOD areas within ½ mile of CTA rail and Metra rail and within ¼ mile of certain high frequency CTA bus, the ordinance:

- **Parking:** Allows 50% reduction of parking requirements by right and 100% reduction with administrative adjustment. Establishes a maximum of one space per two residential units.
- **Density:** Reduces Minimum Lot Area (MLA) in certain zones allowing more units to be built.
- **Affordability:** Allows additional floor area for projects in which at least 50% of affordable requirements are provided on site in B and C zones.
- **Parking Swap Bonus:** Allows additional units for projects that reduce parking by 50% or more.
- **Accessibility Zoning Bonus:** Allows additional units for projects in which 25% of dwelling units are accessible in certain residential zoning districts.
- **People Friendly Design:** Provides guidelines for developments in B and C districts to follow Pedestrian Street requirements.



The Lucy Gonzalez Parsons Apartments were one of the first projects to use the Connected Communities Ordinance, providing 100 units that are 100% affordable, built on a former city-owned parking lot adjacent to the CTA Logan Square Blue Line Station.

TIMELINE

A summary of the process from the City of Chicago's first TOD ordinance in 2013 to the Connected Communities Ordinance, approved in 2022:

2013	City's first TOD ordinance is established
2015	TOD ordinance is amended for the first time
2019	TOD ordinance goes through a second amendment, this time marking the introduction of equity-focused language
2020	ETOD Working Group forms to develop an ETOD Policy Plan, laying the groundwork for an updated TOD ordinance with greater focus on equity
2022	Connected Communities Ordinance is approved by City Council

Undertake Marketing & Developer Recruitment

It is helpful if the municipality can take an active role in marketing and developer recruitment for critical sites around transit service. Even in strong markets, there are often challenges for "infill" development along existing transit service compared with "greenfield" development in which sites tend to be larger and development-ready. In many cases, land assemblage is difficult due to multiple property owners, small sites, and transportation and utility constraints.

In areas where developers have not been showing interest in sites around transit, it is important to reach out to developers and find out why. Is it a complex code or process? Parking standards that are too high? Is it land assemblage or environmental remediation costs? Or is it a case where developers haven't shown interest simply because the area has been overlooked? Often, the municipality, along with allies such as chambers of commerce or other community-based organizations, need to make the case for why development can be financially successful in the community.

Assemble Land

Municipalities may need to work with developers to assemble land, which land banks can also help with. Land banks acquire and sell abandoned and vacant properties to responsible owners, often through the tax foreclosure process. They can be key partners to acquire land, rehabilitate properties and attract new owners to redevelop properties in transit-served areas. In the RTA service area, there are three active land banks: South Suburban Land Bank Authority which covers 28 municipalities in south Cook County and northern Will County; Cook County Land Bank Authority which covers all of Cook County; and Northern Illinois Land Bank Authority which covers Lake, McHenry, Boone, and Winnebago Counties. Other municipalities and counties in the region can create a land bank through an intergovernmental agreement.

Pursue Transportation Planning & Infrastructure Improvements

Transportation planning can be part of a comprehensive plan, a stand-alone municipal-wide transportation plan, or focused on a specific district or corridor. As discussed in Chapter X, active transportation planning focuses on making sure the transportation network is safe for all users and modes and relies heavily on public engagement in the planning process.

Municipalities can best support transit ridership by 1) increasing density around transit stations/stops and bus routes and 2) ensuring that people can easily access transit stations and stops with safe pedestrian and bike infrastructure. These two improvements – increasing density and providing greater access – are addressed below.

To support access to transit, communities can work to maximize bicycle and pedestrian networks. For example, a municipality can ensure that there are good sidewalk networks on roads that are served by bus routes, so that people can easily and safely walk to bus stops. Communities can also ensure that there is robust pedestrian infrastructure at intersections that people need to cross to reach transit. Additionally, providing bicycle networks – in the form of protected on-street lanes, off-street paths, and intersection improvements – can help people from farther away access transit resources, as can providing secured and covered bicycle parking at train stations and bus stops. Since pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure has been shown to increase property values, this is a win-win for both municipalities and residents and property owners.

As individual communities are thinking about how to best improve transit access, there are several resources:

The **RTA Funding Guide**, available on its website, lists local, state and federal funding opportunities to implement transit-friendly policies and development. The list includes local, regional, state, federal and private foundation sources and can be sorted or searched below.

The RTA's website also provides **toolkits and educational resources** for communities looking to improve transit policies. There are currently guides on Parking, Zoning, and Mobility Hubs.

Similarly, **CMAP can offer planning technical assistance** to communities looking to develop ADA Transition Plans, bicycle and pedestrian plans, corridor plans, comprehensive plans, and others.

IDOT offers planning assistance, and also offers a framework for local planning via its statewide pedestrian and bicycle plan and statewide public transportation plan.

The **Cook County Department of Transportation & Highways (DOTH)** can also provide technical assistance with transit, bike-ped, roadway/intersection design, and related transportation planning and design services for locations that are adjacent to CCDOTH roadway jurisdiction. Such assistance is primarily done through the **Invest in Cook** grant program, but DOTH may also work directly with Cook County municipalities on specific projects.

Partner with RTA, Transit Providers, and CMAP

RTA Community Planning Program

The RTA's Community Planning program provides funding as well as technical assistance to applicants for implementation and planning projects that benefit the community and the regional transit system. A call for projects is typically issued in the fall of each year, followed by awards made in the winter. Eligible projects include equitable transit-oriented development (ETOD) plans, transit corridor plans, TOD zoning code updates, TOD development discussion panels, transit neighborhood mobility hub studies, studies to develop special financing districts in transit areas, and other innovative implementation approaches.

Completed planning projects from the RTA's Planning Programs can be found at RTAMS.org.

RTA Access to Transit Program

In 2012, the RTA launched the Access to Transit Program to fund small-scale projects that improve access to the regional transit system for pedestrians and bicyclists. The goals of the program are to increase transit ridership, reduce congestion, improve first and last mile connections, lower demand for driving and commuter parking, create pedestrian friendly neighborhoods, and support transit-oriented development. Vehicle parking projects are not eligible unless parking changes are needed to improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Eligible applicants include municipalities and counties in the RTA service area that are participating or have participated in RTA's Community Planning program or CMAP's LTA Program and have CTA, Metra, or Pace service in their community. Projects can range from $5,000 to $1 million.

The Village of Brookfield used Access to Transit funds to install 24 covered bicycle racks at the Congress Park Metra Station and 12 racks at the Brookfield Metra Station. These stations have some of the highest active transportation use among all stations on the BNSF line

RTA Potential Role as a Partner in Development

Since 1998, the RTA has supported TOD planning and policy throughout the region through its Community Planning program. While this program has allowed the RTA to play a vital role in assisting communities in developing plans and policy to support TOD, municipalities have largely taken the lead on land use development. Additionally, service boards have generated revenues from parking lots and concessions at stations, but those efforts have been limited and the agencies do not currently have statutory authority to build mixed-used development on top of stations or parking lots.

In an effort to expand RTA's ability to improve transit access, grow ridership, generate non-fare revenue for the transit system, and support economic growth, the RTA is studying the feasibility of and barriers to pursuing a role in real estate development of transit agency owned property, including a joint development program. Joint development allows a transit agency to capture some of the economic value created by the transit system and use those funds to support the transit system's operations. Joint development can be pursued by partnering with private entities through property sales, ground leases, air rights, rent concessions, etc. This is an approach that many other transit agencies take advantage of, including those in Washington D.C., San Francisco, Denver, Atlanta, Vancouver, BC and London, England.

The RTA will lead the effort on behalf of the three Service Boards to explore the potential to pursue a joint development program for the regional transit system, pending legislative authority to implement such a program. An immediate next step is to engage with a real estate firm to inventory all real estate holdings across all three service boards, assess all potential strategies for joint development based on existing real estate and determine the potential costs and benefits of a joint development program for the transit agencies and the region.

If a joint development program is considered beneficial, the RTA could follow the lead of other transit agencies and create an office of transit-oriented development and real estate to lead joint development efforts. As any joint development efforts would primarily occur on transit agency owned land within municipalities throughout the region, the RTA will engage with municipal leaders to gain their feedback and understand local priorities.

Metra

Metra has long been involved in supporting TOD, integrating service with improved access to the station and rail service. With significant changes in ridership patterns since COVID and as a result in changing commute patterns, there may be opportunities to capture unused parking areas for new development and amenities. Metra can play a role in the development of a sustainable region by supporting and initiating ETOD on these underutilized parking lots. The creation and implementation of a transit-oriented development approach supports Metra's My Metra, Our Future Strategic Plan.

Metra is examining parking at stations to better understand current and future demand so the agency can right-size the supply of commuter parking. Not all parking lots will be good candidates for redevelopment based on station access and future parking demand. ETOD on underutilized parking lots will still have to maintain enough parking spaces at the station to accommodate commuters who park and maintain access for passenger drop-off and pick-up. Metra also encourages communities to explore parking fees and policies that are adapted to current parking trends both for commuters and for general use. As people continue to work hybrid schedules, a daily fee system can accommodate riders' needs better than a monthly or quarterly permit.

CTA

With 145 L Stations on eight lines and 127 bus routes, CTA covers all of the City of Chicago and 35 suburbs. The City of Chicago and suburban municipalities can work with CTA and applicable DOTs to complete street right-of-way improvements and streetscape enhancements to support transit, as well as partnering on station area planning efforts.

For example, as part of the Red Line Extension to 130th Street, the CTA and City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development (DPD) partnered to develop a Transit-Supportive Development (TSD) Plan to guide future development in the communities around the project area.

CTA can also partner with communities in local planning efforts relating to development around station areas and bus corridors. A current emphasis on ETOD is focusing on supporting development around stations on the South and West Sides of Chicago.

Suburban planning efforts often involve multiple service agencies such as CTA, Metra, and Pace. Working together, access infrastructure can be improved to serve all users at these stations and bus routes.

Pace

Municipalities can partner with Pace to improve service, modernize routes, and ensure that regional transportation service is based on customers' travel needs. Many of the tools in this guidebook would enhance the customer experience and make someone more likely to take Pace to reach a destination. These strategies include ensuring there are sidewalks along bus routes, creating pedestrian connections between the bus stop and the front doors of commercial storefronts, locating buildings closer to the street along commercial corridors, and planning new development near bus routes.

Community partners can reference Pace's Transit Supportive Guidelines for principles and standards that may be implemented by municipalities, designers, engineers, and others. Originally published in 2013, the Guidelines were updated in January 2024 with an addendum for Pulse that focuses on tailored development standards for Pulse service, including station amenities, station placement, bus-bike interfacing, and signage. Potential future Pace Pulse lines can be supported by planning for new development and destinations along bus corridors to support future ridership.

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)

CMAP, the region's metropolitan planning organization covering seven counties, provides a number of resources related to transit-friendly development. Through its website, informational resources are available such as the "Infill and TOD" ON TO 2050 Snapshot Report. CMAP also provides Community Data Snapshots that summarize important demographic, housing, employment, transportation, and land use data for all of the region's counties, municipalities, and Chicago community areas.

CMAP coordinates its technical assistance program, which supports communities through planning and implementation assistance, with the RTA's Community Planning program. CMAP provides different types of assistance such as: (ADA) self-evaluation and transition plans to help communities identify improvements that make sidewalks, crosswalks, curb ramps and landings easier to navigate; bicycle and pedestrian plans; capital improvement plans; corridor plans, NEXT Program (plan implementation assistance); and transportation safety plans.

The agency also administers various programs for important transportation improvements that could help implement transit-friendly projects:

- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ):** This program provides funding for projects that improve air quality and mitigate congestion, such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities or programs promoting greater transit ridership.
- **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP):** Federally funded program of surface transportation improvements designed to support non-motorized transportation. CMAP uses a competitive process to select bicycle and pedestrian projects to that help complete the Regional Greenways and Trail Plan.
- **Surface Transportation Program (STP)** provides funding for road projects that improve public transportation or bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Implementation Checklist

The table below summarizes key actions that can be taken to advance and implement ETOD policies, recruit developers, and seek resources to promote transit-friendly communities. It is written as a series of questions that can be used as a checklist for municipal staff and decision makers or other community partners to review current policies and define action steps. Priorities for implementation will vary based on community needs.

Action	Yes/No	Lead	Support
PLANNING & ZONING			
Is your comprehensive plan up-to-date? (Updated in the last 5-10 years)	☐	Muni	Community engagement, CMAP
Do you have a plan for your transit area or corridor?	☐	Muni	Elevated Chicago, CMAP, Community engagement, RTA
Is there consensus among elected/appointed officials on the types of uses and densities desired in ETOD areas? Is this vision reflected in plans and zoning?	☐	Muni	Elevated Chicago, Community engagement
Is your zoning code consistent with your plan, especially in transit-accessible areas?	☐	Muni	Community engagement
Is mixed-use zoning allowed in your ETOD area?	☐	Muni	Community engagement, RTA
Is multi-family housing allowed in your transit-accessible area? Is it 'as-of-right" or is a "planned unit development" (PUD) required?	☐	Muni	Community engagement, RTA, CMAP
Can transit-friendly policies and incentives be combined into a unified ordinance (e.g. Chicago's Connected Communities Ordinance)?	☐	Muni	Community engagement
Is there a housing plan that provides clear goals, guidance and incentives?	☐	Muni	IL Housing Council, IHDA, Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, MPC
Do your codes require transit access infrastructure as part of a development's public improvements?	☐	Muni	
Are your building codes up-to-date? Are there any code barriers to ETOD?	☐	Muni	
MARKETING AND DEVELOPMENT RECRUITMENT			
Has there been a recent market study that identifies possible uses?	☐	Muni	Chamber or EDC, Consultants
Have sites been identified for reuse, redevelopment or new development?	☐	Muni	Chamber, EDC, Property owners, Elevated Chicago, developers
Has the municipality reached out to developers for input on what types of development they would be interested in and if there are any barriers that can be resolved?	☐	Muni, Chamber or EDC	RTA, ULI Chicago, APA-IL

Action	Yes/No	Lead	Support
Are there marketing sheets that promote development opportunities in the ETOD area?	☐	Muni, Chamber or EDC	Developers, property owners, Elevated Chicago
Does the municipality attend educational, marketing and developer recruitment events such as ICSC@Central, ULI Chicago, and APA-IL? (And what are the relevant learnings for attracting or re-moving barriers for new investment?)	☐	Muni	ICSC, ULI Chicago, APA-IL
FINANCIAL INCENTIVES			
Is the area in a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) or is the area eligible for establishing a District?	☐	Muni	RTA
Is the area in a Special Service Area or Business Development District that would provide funding for marketing, additional trash collection, and events?	☐	Muni	RTA
Are there any available incentive programs (such as Cook County's Special Assessment Properties)?	☐	Muni	County
LAND ASSEMBLY			
Should the municipality consider assisting with assembling land to attract new development?	☐	Muni	
Is there opportunity to work with Metra to redevelop underutilized commuter parking lots or consider land swaps?	☐	Muni	Metra
Should the municipality consider land "write downs" to sell land at a lower cost to developments that meet local ETOD priorities?	☐	Muni	Developers
RTA PROGRAMS			
Have you applied to update your ETOD plan through the RTA Community Planning Program?	☐	Muni	RTA, CTA, Metra, Pace
Do you have projects that would qualify for the Access to Transit Program?	☐	Muni	RTA
Are you interested in exploring the potential for joint development with RTA?	☐	Muni	RTA

Action	Yes/No	Lead	Support
METRA			
Do you have underutilized Metra parking lots?	☐	Metra	Muni
Who is the property owner of the potential development site?	☐	Metra	Muni
Are there restrictions on redeveloping the site, such as federal or state funding?	☐	Metra	Muni
What is the long-term parking demand and is it feasible to reduce parking?	☐	Metra	Muni
Do local zoning codes allow for redevelopment?	☐	Muni	Community engagement
Are access infrastructure improvements needed, e.g. sidewalks, lighting, signage?	☐	RTA, Muni	Metra
Are there opportunities for shared use parking between commuters and other uses?	☐	Muni	Metra
CTA			
Is there underutilized land near CTA stations or routes?	☐	Muni	City of Chicago Planning Now and other Programs
Is there a ETOD plan around the CTA station or bus route?	☐	RTA, City of Chicago	Community organizations, Special Service Areas, chambers of commerce
Are access infrastructure improvements needed, e.g. sidewalks, lightning, signage?	☐	RTA, Muni	CTA
Are financial incentives available near stations and routes?	☐	City of Chicago or suburban munis	City of Chicago Dept. of Planning and Development
PACE			
Is there an ETOD plan around the bus route?	☐	RTA	Elevated Chicago
Are access infrastructure improvements needed, e.g. sidewalks, lightning, signage?	☐	RTA, Muni	Pace
Are there road improvements planned in which bike and pedestrian infrastructure could be added?	☐	Muni	IDOT, County
Are there missing links between bus routes, bike facilities, and sidewalks?	☐	Muni	County, IDOT
Do you have projects that would qualify for the Access to Transit Program?	☐	Muni	RTA

LOCAL FUNDING SOURCES

Business Development Districts: provide additional funding and services within a defined area through an increase in the sales tax.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF): a public financing method used to support community improvement projects, redevelopment, and infrastructure initiatives. TIF dedicates future property tax revenue increases from a defined area toward economic development projects or public improvements within that area.

Sales Tax Sharing Agreement: Local governments can enter into an agreement to share or rebate any portion of a retailers' occupation taxes generated by retail sales, incentivizing businesses to reinvest the reimbursed funds back into the local economy through improvements to their own business. Communities might prioritize businesses located near transit to encourage investment in TOD ares.

Special Service Area (SSA): a defined district that provides funding for additional services through a small increase in the property tax. The revenue is typically used for enhanced landscaping, trash clean-up, events and marketing the area. SSA funds can also be used for transportation and public space infrastructure improvements.

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program provides federal funding for community-based projects, from housing rehab to public infrastructure like sidewalks: https://dceo.illinois.gov/communitydevelopment/cdbg_programs.html

Cook County Property Tax Incentives / Special Assessment Properties may provide incentives for ETOD projects: https://www.cookcountyassessor.com/incentives-special-properties

Land Banks: Land banks can be key partners for municipalities to acquire land, rehabilitate properties and attract new owners to redevelop properties in transit-served areas. In the RTA region, there are three active land banks:

- Cook County Land Bank: https://www.cookcountylandbank.org/
- Northern Illinois Land Bank: https://r1planning.org/community-revitalization/land-bank/
- South Suburban Land Bank: https://www.sslbda.com/

Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program for affordable housing: https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/lihtc.html

Rebuild Illinois Downtowns and Main Streets Capital program (RDMS) will provide grants for construction, repair and modernization of public infrastructure and amenities located in a commercial center or downtown area and may include, but are not limited to roadways, parking and public way improvements, investments in parks and venues or plazas for public use, sustainability upgrades, structural repairs, and mixed-use or transit-oriented development. https://dceo.illinois.gov/news/press-release.29945.html

Other Resources via the RTA's Funding Guide, which lists available funding sources to help implement transit-friendly policies and transit-oriented development. The list includes local, regional, state, federal and private foundation sources. https://www.rtachicago.org/communities/toolkits-and-education/funding-guide

RESOURCES FOR ACCESS INFRASTRUCTURE

APBP Essentials of Bike Parking: A widely-recognized standard for best practices in bicycle parking design: https://www.apbp.org/assets/docs/EssentialsofBikeParking_FINA.pdf

FHWA Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (MUTCD): Defines the standards used by road managers nationwide to install and maintain traffic control devices on all streets, highways, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and site roadways open to public travel: https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/

Guide to the ADA Accessibility Standards: A complete summary of ADA Standards for curbs and curb ramps from the U.S. Access Board: https://www.access-board.gov/ada/guides/chapter-4-ramps-and-curb-ramps/

IDOT BLRS Manual: Provides current design and environment policies and procedures for use in developing local agency highway projects: https://idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/local-transportation-partners/county-engineers-and-local-public-agencies/lpa-project-development-and-implementation/policy-and-procedures/local-roads-and-streets-manual.html

Metra Station and Parking Design Guidelines: Details standards for station structures, platform design, site design, parking and accessibility. https://metra.com/sites/default/files/inline-files/Metra%20Station%20and%20Parking%20Design%20Guidelines%2020220201.pdf

NACTO Urban Street Design Guide: Provides best practices for mobility and safety infrastructure design including lane width, sidewalks, crossing improvements, speed control elements, transit lanes, and bus stops: https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/

NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide: Provides best practices for bicycle infrastructure design, including determining the best facility type: https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/

Pace Transit Supportive Guidelines: Provides guidance specific to Pace infrastructure and facilities: https://www.pacebus.com/sites/default/files/2024-04/0006-MIS_TransitSupportiveGuidelinesFINAL.pdf

Pace Guidelines for Pace Pulse Infrastructure and Facilities: Provides guidance specific tor Pace Pulse service and infrastructure: https://www.pacebus.com/sites/default/files/2024-04/0006-MIS_TransitSupportiveGuidelines_PulseAddendumOnly_0.pdf

RTA Access to Transit Program: A grant program to help communities improve the infrastructure around their transit stations and stops. https://www.rtachicago.org/communities/access-to-transit-program

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3. U.S. DOT: Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making

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2. NACTO Urban Street Design Guide
3. APBP Essentials of Bike Parking: https://www.apbp.org/assets/docs/EssentialsofBikeParking_FINA.pdf

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