

# *Growing Smart Neighborhoods*

INFORMATION, MODELS AND TRENDS FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPERS  
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## **Linking Community Development to Transit Oriented Development (TOD)**

People don't often think about the links between community development and transportation planning. Yet, nonprofits are starting to focus on transit-oriented development (TOD) as the next step toward comprehensive and lasting revitalization in many neighborhoods. What is TOD? Who is doing it? How can interested nonprofits get involved?

### **What is TOD?**

- Transit-oriented development is defined as higher density, mixed-use development that is located in or around transit facilities (train stations, bus stations, etc.).
- The goal of TOD is to develop affordable housing, office space and retail facilities in close proximity to accessible transportation systems, in order to improve the quality of life in many neighborhoods and reduce dependence on the automobile.
- Community developers have long recognized that transportation and access to jobs are crucial ingredients for the success and sustainability of many urban neighborhoods.
- Federal, state and local governments are also interested in developing transportation systems with local partners that better meet the needs of urban neighborhoods; and they have funds available to get the job done.
- Nonprofits are starting to see business opportunities in transportation-related development; opportunities that improve livability by anchoring other development activity and by connecting a neighborhood and its residents to regional partners.

### **Who Does TOD? Partnerships of public, private and nonprofit organizations including:**

- Federal agencies including the Federal Transit Agency, the Environmental Protection Agency and HUD.
- State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs).
- Local or regional transit authorities, local planning departments and local development agencies.
- Local and national foundations that promote community and economic development.
- Community-based and national nonprofits including LISC and National Neighborhood Coalition (NNC).

### **How to Get Started with TOD?**

- Think about where transportation exists in your community and where it does not.
- Identify local transit authority staff and state DOT planners.
- Get a copy of your city's master development plan and review the transportation subsection for priorities.
- Talk with people who have done TOD work in your area or who are interested in doing it.
- If opportunities exist, hold a local meeting to determine community interest.

### **TOD Resources**

- Surface Transportation Policy Project (TOD and community development) [www.transact.org/](http://www.transact.org/)
- Federal Transit Administration (federal TOD resources) [www.fta.dot.gov/](http://www.fta.dot.gov/) and [www.peak.org/~jbs/](http://www.peak.org/~jbs/)
- American Public Transit Association (state and local TOD references) [www.apta.com/](http://www.apta.com/)
- Funders' Network for Smart Growth (foundation smart growth group) [www.fundersnetwork.org](http://www.fundersnetwork.org)
- NNC (neighborhoods and smart growth) [www.nnc.org](http://www.nnc.org)
- Smart Growth America (communities and smart growth) [www.smartgrowthamerica.org/default.htm](http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/default.htm)
- LISC's State Policy Office (David Hunter, transportation issues) [dhunter@liscnet.org](mailto:dhunter@liscnet.org)

# Nonprofit TOD Examples

## Fruitvale Transit Village, Oakland, California – The Next Step for a Revitalizing Community

- This project is a \$46 million mixed-use redevelopment of the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) commuter rail station in the Fruitvale section of Oakland, California. Fruitvale was once a thriving community, but it deteriorated over several decades as businesses, jobs and middle-income homeowners left the neighborhood, and as unemployment and crime increased. Comprehensive revitalization efforts have been underway in Fruitvale for many years, and today it is the center of Oakland's Latino business and residential communities.
- This project is led by the Unity Council, a 37-year old Latino CDC based in the Fruitvale neighborhood, in partnership with BART, the City of Oakland, the Oakland Redevelopment Agency, La Clinica de la Raza and various local merchants and residents.
- The Fruitvale Transit Village is designed to create and retain much-needed jobs for Fruitvale residents, leverage the revitalization work that has already occurred in Fruitvale and provide a vibrant pedestrian-oriented environment. When completed, the Transit Village will replace two parking lots with a transit center that connects Fruitvale residents and commuters to BART trains, 8 bus lines, a major freeway and the neighborhood's main commercial corridor. The development will also include 47 new apartment homes and 157,000 square feet of commercial and community space.
- LISC is providing a \$4 million construction loan for this TOD, which is expected to break ground by the end of 2001. For more information about the Fruitvale Transit Village, visit the Unity Council's website at <http://www.unitycouncil.org/html/aboutftv.html>

## 79<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Initiative, Miami, Florida – First Stop in Neighborhood Revitalization

- This is a comprehensive effort to rebuild a fragmented set of residential, commercial and industrial sites into a cohesive and sustainable neighborhood with a transit center at its core. The 79<sup>th</sup> Street corridor has a long history of declining social and economic conditions. It was the site of major civil disturbances in 1980s; it has a high concentration of low-income families and a low homeownership rate. The area also lacks basic goods and service providers, and there are few employment or entrepreneurial opportunities.
- The 79<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood has significant transportation assets; however, they are underutilized. Three rail lines including Amtrak pass through the 79<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood, but they do not all intersect. Collectively, these rail lines link 79<sup>th</sup> Street to Downtown Miami, Miami International Airport and job-rich Broward and Palm Beach Counties. They also have the potential to transport thousands of residents, commuters and visitors to and from the 79<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor on a daily basis.
- The initial focus of the Initiative will be on the development of a transit center that will link all three rail lines. This center will contain mixed-use development including convenience retail, new residential, light industrial and even performing arts space. Subsequently, the Initiative will expand to include affordable housing development, retail and commercial development and infrastructure upgrades throughout the corridor.
- This effort, which is in its initial planning stages, is led by three community-based nonprofits: the Urban League of Greater Miami, Miami-Dade Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc. and Dade Employment and Economic Development Corp. Greater Miami LISC has provided \$20,000 in initial operating support, and other supporters include SURDNA, the McArthur Foundation, the Center for Neighborhood Technology and the Collins Center. The 79<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Initiative is in its initial planning stages. For more information, visit [www.floridacdc.org/79th/index.html](http://www.floridacdc.org/79th/index.html).