

How Transportation and Community Partnerships Are Shaping America

Part I: Transit Stops and Stations



How Transportation and Community Partnerships are Shaping America

Project for Public Spaces, Inc.

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Photo: Arts in Transit

*"TileLink" community tile project,
Delmar MetroLink Station, St. Louis:
Artwork by Catharine Magel*



*Leimert Park Village landscapers
with Bev Cashan, Executive Director,
Leimert Park Village Community
Development Corporation*

Introduction

Transit facilities... and transportation corridors... are natural focal points for communities.

Concerns about livability are shared by every type of community, in inner cities, small towns and rural areas. This booklet explores how people in these communities are working in partnership with transportation agencies on locally-initiated projects and programs to create transportation systems that enhance places. While this booklet emphasizes the direct relationship between community reinvigoration and community-supportive transit facilities, case studies also demonstrate how the sympathetic design of roadways strengthens the connection between the two.

Transit facilities, whether a simple bus stop or a major train station, and transportation corridors, whether a main street or a boulevard, are natural focal points for communities. To view them as catalysts for strengthening community life necessitates a shift from the way transportation has traditionally been conceived. In this more holistic, "place-making" partnership approach, transit operators, traffic engineers, residents, merchants, property owners, city agencies, planners, architects, and developers, as well as community and faith-based organizations are demonstrating that through these partnerships, they can bring together the goals of transportation agencies and the livability goals of communities.

In Somerville, Massachusetts, subway construction was followed by streetscape improvements, traffic calming measures and an influx of new businesses which has revived Davis Square and made it a livability community.



A New Era for Transportation: Partnerships Around Place

The case studies included in this booklet address how transportation partnerships are re-shaping America. Each of these partnerships relies upon the input of those who use and experience a place on a regular basis. The focus is not only upon the bus stop, street, or station itself, but on how these facilities connect to the surrounding districts and public spaces and make these areas more economically stable, safe, and productive.

Although these projects occur at the micro level, they are combating macro-level problems by:

- Creating strong town and neighborhood centers that act as an antidote to sprawl;
- Increasing transit ridership to reduce dependency on driving and its negative environmental impacts;
- Reducing the need for costly investments in new public infrastructure, such as highway construction and roadway widening;
- Guiding private sector development in a more sustainable, transit-supportive way.

Transportation partnerships, therefore, not only provide an opportunity to pool resources and share responsibility for implementation, but create a mechanism to address broader "quality of life" issues. This place-making process is unlike the more typical approach to planning, whereby separate design professionals and city agencies carry out their own isolated schemes, with little awareness about where these projects may lead.

Working Incrementally

Place-making is rarely accomplished through a single, large-scale construction project. In fact, many places are successfully improved in a very short period of time with low-cost design changes. The short-term projects featured in this booklet took between two and twelve months



to implement, yet they are not interim solutions. Rather they are stepping stones within the context of a larger plan, serving as catalysts for productive change, while providing immediate enhancement for communities.

Measuring Success

Place-making also calls for new ways of measuring the success of transportation facilities. In the case of streets, success is measured based upon how well pedestrians, bicycles, autos, and transit are accommodated and the extent to which a street reflects, preserves, and enhances a community's unique personality and is supportive of local businesses and residents. Transit service itself should not be evaluated only in terms of system ridership and on-time performance, but according to the number of community

partnerships established to help maintain and manage a facility, the extent of its impact on the economic vitality of its adjacent commercial districts, and the degree to which a facility functions as a community gateway.

The successes achieved by the case studies presented in this booklet are directly attributable to the skill and effectiveness of the partnerships established to carry them out. These case studies highlight specific projects that addressed different transportation and livability concerns in a variety of communities and among different constituencies. Reading about these real success stories will inspire transportation officials and their many existing and potential partners to pursue, with fresh conviction, the true potential that our nation's transportation systems and facilities offer to the communities they serve.

Place-making calls for new ways of measuring the success of transportation facilities.

Portions of this booklet were excerpted and adapted from the following publication: The Role of Transit In Creating Livable Metropolitan Communities (TCRP Report 22), Transit Cooperative Research Program, National Academy Press, Washington, DC (1997). It contains more information about the following case studies: Woodbridge, NJ; the NJ Transit Station Renewal Program; GOBoulder, Boulder, CO; LANI, Los Angeles, CA; Wellston Station, Wellston, MO; and the "place-making" approach to transportation planning.

Project Partners

- Federal Agencies
- Transit Agencies
- County Governments
- City Governments
- Mayors
- Downtown Associations and Chambers of Commerce
- Local Businesses
- Community and Non-Profit Organizations

“What makes LANI work is the fact that, to the greatest extent possible, we give control and funding to the community to actually realize its vision. It’s not just a plan that sits on a shelf.”

—Joyce Perkins,
LANI Executive Director

In the wake of the civil unrest that gripped Los Angeles in April 1992, Los Angeles mayor Richard Riordan launched the Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative (LANI), a grassroots program designed to restore people’s sense of ownership over their neighborhood commercial districts. LANI focuses on developing community plans for neighborhood main streets, beginning with pragmatic improvements to areas adjacent to bus stops and rail stations.

They realized that transit stops can also function as focal points for shopping, community, economic, and social activities.

In each of the twelve LANI neighborhoods, a local organization is given a grant to develop a bus stop area plan, and responsibility for the grant’s administration. LANI then helps these organizations to evolve a shared vision for their neighborhood. The members of these organizations, which include local residents, businesses, and community groups, have planted trees, installed and painted new streetlights,

hung colorful banners, redesigned their streets to be more pedestrian-friendly, and revitalized vacant lots as parks and community gathering places. As these groups have matured, most have successfully leveraged additional funding to make longer-term improvements and become permanent organizations for community revitalization.

LANI also helps put community plans into action by streamlining the governmental approval process to reduce delay and bureaucratic frustration. As a result, LANI groups have been able to work as partners with city, state and county agencies to make these projects a reality. In addition, LANI staff uses their knowledge and influence to assemble resources from multiple federal, state, city, and private sources and pass them through to projects planned by local communities.



Leimert Park Village with new bus shelter



Locally owned businesses sport new flower

“Without LANI, we would not have gone as far or as fast as we have. LANI was the wheel that started everything turning — not only at the beginning, but on an ongoing basis.”

—Beverly Cashen, Executive Director of the
Leimert Park Village Community Development Corporation



North Hollywood

Leimert Park Village

Leimert Park Village, built in the 1920s as a planned community, is emerging as one of Los Angeles' premier African-American cultural centers and commercial districts, and is home to over 125 businesses. The park at the center of the village holds more festivals than any other in the city of Los Angeles. However, since the once-charming village center had deteriorated throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, Leimert Park Village was selected as one of LANI's initial demonstration projects. Under the LANI initiative, the community has:

- Planted trees and flowers;
- Installed banners and decorative trash receptacles throughout the village;
- Added three bus shelters with matching benches and a transit information center;
- Received a \$250,000 grant from the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) for facade restoration;
- Attracted \$285,000 from the CRA for streetscape improvements, including a "Jazz Walk of Fame;"
- Enacted an assessment of property owners to pay for additional street lighting throughout the village;
- Worked with the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks on a \$600,000 restoration of Leimert Park.

The Leimert Park Village Community Development Corporation, a permanent non-profit organization that evolved out of the original LANI group, is now spearheading continuing revitalization efforts.



Transit Art Park - after with Pitfire Pizza

North Hollywood

For years, the old downtown of North Hollywood had been reinventing itself as an arts and theater district, but progress was slow. Leave it to a creative community to jump-start the process by transforming a bus stop on a vacant lot into a "Transit Art Park."

The North Hollywood Community Forum (NHCF), which grew out of the North Hollywood LANI community group, has:

- Transformed a city-owned vacant lot that only had a "stick in the ground" with a sign identifying it as a bus stop, by adding grass, trees, an art-poster-adorned information kiosk, and a new bus shelter;
- Sublet the park from the Community Redevelopment Agency to a new restaurant that moved into a building facing the Transit Art Park;
- Received \$60,000 in additional park landscaping and design improvements for the park from the restaurant, which also maintains the park.

As a result of the ongoing efforts of the NHCF, the number of commercial vacancies in the area adjacent to the park has fallen by 30 percent, eight new businesses have been attracted to the immediate vicinity, and over \$500,000 has been invested in the properties adjacent to Transit Art Park.

"What LANI taught us was that if you make small demonstrative and quick improvements in an area, it unites the community and generates the kind of spirit you need to move further."

— Ken Banks,
Director of the North Hollywood
Community Forum



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Project Partners

Transit Agencies
State/County Transportation
Officials
City Governments
Mayors
Downtown Associations and
Chambers of Commerce
Local Businesses
Community and Non-Profit
Organizations

Call it an epiphany, or just a good idea, but it came upon the state transportation organization all at once, and with great force. Fifteen years ago, officials at New Jersey Transit (NJT) and the New Jersey Department of Transportation made the connection between healthy transit systems and healthy downtowns.

Although many towns in New Jersey are graced with centrally-located 19th century train stations, after years of neglect, many of these station buildings were no longer lovely, and their decay was not only hurting transit ridership, but was proving detrimental to New Jersey's downtowns as well. In partnership with Project for Public Spaces, Inc., NJT has been experimenting successfully with a place-making approach, based upon the belief that stations function as community places as well as transportation facilities.

Five train stations of varying size, ridership levels, and rider demographics were selected for the first phase of

the Station Renewal Program. Its goals were to improve the condition, appearance, use, and—most important—

ly—the management of these commuter rail stations; to serve passengers more effectively; and to promote both public transit and economic development in the communities in which the stations are located. NJT is in the process of expanding this program into the Model Stations and Shelters Initiative, which will target 50 stations and bus facilities for renewal and upgrade in its first year.

The place-making approach, as developed with Project for Public Spaces, is now a common practice at NJT. It consists of:

- J Meetings with NJT management;
- J Detailed observations of passenger use of rail stations;
- J Surveys of train passengers;
- J Interviews with nearby retailers;
- J Studies of passenger waiting and circulation;
- J Community meetings with local residents, merchants, and city representatives.

Through this process, a clear picture of how each station is used and perceived evolves; participants identify their most pressing needs and concerns and make suggestions for improvements to station buildings and adjacent area; and communities share responsibility for designing



Before - Pearl Street Entrance, NJ Transit Woodbridge Train Station



After, NJ Transit Woodbridge Train Station

“This train station is about the public, about our citizens; it is about using our train station to attract people to our downtown community.”

—James McGreevey,
Mayor, Woodbridge Township

“What we did differently with this project was to look at these stations as a part of their communities.”

—Rick Richmond,
Assistant Executive Director,
New Jersey Transit
Department of Engineering



Maplewood Station

and implementing station improvements as well as for ongoing maintenance and management of stations and adjacent public spaces.

Woodbridge Station

Sorely in need of work, the train station in Woodbridge was little more than a graffiti-filled, dimly lit tunnel through the side of a railroad viaduct at the edge of downtown. Design improvements focused on elements that would enhance the presence of the station and link it to the surrounding area:

- Clear directional signage;
- New entrance canopies;
- Dedicated “kiss n’ ride” drop-off areas;
- Two retail kiosks flanking the main entrance;
- An artist-created station map showing transit, business, and cultural information.

NJT painted “Welcome to Woodbridge” on the trestle over Main Street, in colors and typeface matching those used by the Downtown Woodbridge Merchants Association; the sign also directs people to the station and its parking lots.

While planning work was underway, the merchants association was creating a special improvement district to implement streetscape enhancements. NJT incorpo-

rated the same design features into the station. Now that the station is rebuilt, the merchants association collects parking fees and oversees maintenance of the station area to make sure it stays clean and attractive.

Maplewood Station

When NJT seeks to attract vendors and businesses to locate inside its stations, it looks first to businesses in the immediate vicinity or to small vendors who are given the opportunity to market goods and services, or try out new product lines. At the Maplewood Station, the Maplewood Concierge Company offers the services and products of nearly 70 local businesses — everything from car repair to take home dinners — to the 2,000 commuters who leave before and return after business hours everyday. NJT worked with the Maplewood Chamber of Commerce to convince area merchants to buy shares in the for-profit concierge company.

Customers place orders in the morning, in person or by fax, and pick up their orders in the evening at the train station, for retail cost plus a 10% surcharge. Service providers, such as accountants, insurance agents, and housing contractors, advertise through the concierge service.

Transit agencies from other parts of New Jersey, as well as Chicago, Baltimore, and even Tokyo and Berlin, have expressed interest in starting their own version of the Maplewood Concierge Company.



Maplewood Concierge Company

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Not since the Gold Rush has Colorado faced an influx of prospectors as large as the tens of thousands of families who are moving to the Rocky Mountain State to take advantage of its combination of jobs, scenery, open space, and recreational opportunities. But Colorado towns are learning that growth has a price in terms of congestion, sprawl, and pollution, a price that can best be combated

with a “transit-forward” strategy.

GO Boulder

In order to maintain its reputation as one of America’s most livable communities in the face of intense development, the Boulder City Council created GO Boulder, a city agency devoted specifically to promoting transportation alternatives. In 1994, the new agency began developing a master plan aimed at shifting, by the year 2010, 15 percent of automobile trips that people make alone to transit, bikes and foot. However, the plan required a tax to fund it; an unpopular referendum that failed the same year. The city regrouped and, in 1996, developed a new strategy that relied only upon its regularly appropriated budget. The strategy ensured that transit routes served the most popular destinations city-wide; improved the design and comfort of the buses; and made service more direct and frequent. An additional goal was to maintain automobile traffic at 1994 levels.

These revamped services are called the HOP, SKIP and JUMP:

- The HOP is a bus that follows a route connecting the town’s three major activity centers: the downtown business district, the University of



Photo: GO Boulder

HOP Shuttle

“After the failure of the transit tax incentive in 1994, citizens and staff realized that the only way to achieve our transit goal and raise the money necessary to implement it was to increase ridership purely on the basis of innovation.”

— Penny Puskarich,
GO Boulder’s Transit Projects Coordinator



GO Boulder Poster

Courtesy GO Boulder

Colorado's (CU) main campus, and a major retail area. The shuttle is dramatically different than anything Boulder residents had seen before. Instead of traditional 40-foot diesel buses, the HOP is a small, brightly-colored shuttle, which comes every six minutes, not every fifteen, and burns clean, low-sulfur, diesel fuel.

- SKIP is a high-frequency bus route that serves the Broadway corridor, a busy artery connecting Boulder's northern- and southern-most neighborhoods and the commercial centers in between. A partnership between the university and the city keeps the buses running until 3 a.m. when school is in session; the university covers the cost of the night service.
- JUMP, a high-frequency, high-volume bus service slated to commence operation in 2000, will connect the cities of Boulder and Lafayette with high-frequency transit for the first time.

GO Boulder also developed unlimited-access transit passes that are purchased at a discount by employers (the "ECO Pass") and student organizations (the CU bus pass) on an annual basis for all employees and students. Their price was based on a "revenue-neutral" goal in which revenue from the group pass program equals previous farebox revenue from the same market.

The results of the program have been substantial: studies have revealed an increase of up to 300% in ridership among groups using the bus passes; officials estimate that HOP and SKIP provide service to well over two million riders a year, making them the most productive routes in Boulder. Three-and-a-half years after it began, HOP welcomed its three-millionth rider. According to GO Boulder's Penny Puskarich, "From traffic counts over the past three years, trends indicate that we are beginning to achieve our goals, with vehicle miles traveled leveling off."

Contact:

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A Durango LIFT shuttle

Courtesy Durango LIFT

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Durango LIFT

Although it serves only the 17,000 residents and students of Durango, the Durango LIFT logged an astonishing 220,000 transit trips in 1998. Incredibly, passengers paying the 50 cent fare enjoy "route deviation service," meaning buses will drop off or pick up passengers anywhere along designated bus routes.

The LIFT is a small "feeder and loop" system, comprised of seven mini-buses and three trolleys. Like GO Boulder's HOP and SKIP services, a college pays for evening service during the school year. Other partnerships with organizations and businesses have contributed dramatically to LIFT's ridership. For example, downtown businesses buy transit tokens from banks at a discount and give them out to their customers to ride the trolley, or feed parking meters.

The disabled and senior communities also partner with LIFT to ensure that bus routes serve the destinations these riders need to access most — senior apartment complexes, hospitals, grocery stores, etc. The LIFT also operates an Opportunity Bus, which provides door-to-door service to those who are physically incapable of using the regular service.

Because LIFT generates only 10-12 percent of its \$600,000 annual budget from fares and advertising, the city council covers the balance. This commitment alone demonstrates how much the city values the service that LIFT provides to its many transit dependent citizens.

"My hope is that LIFT will spur the creation of a regional transit system for western Colorado."

—Jan Choti,
 Durango LIFT's Executive Director



Durango LIFT brochure

Courtesy Durango LIFT

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Project Partners

- Federal Agencies
- Transit Agencies
- State/County Transportation Officials
- MPOs
- County Governments
- City Governments

- Mayors
- Developers and Homebuilders
- Downtown Associations and Chambers of Commerce
- Traffic Engineers
- Local Businesses
- Community and Non-Profit Organizations

“MetroLink is the reason all of this change is happening in our community. It is not only helping to bring development to this area, it is making it an absolutely beautiful place.”

—Emma Warren, Wellston resident and community leader

“Who’s going to ride the train from East St. Louis to Lambert Airport?” was probably the most frequently heard question throughout the planning, design and construction of St. Louis’ \$353 million MetroLink light rail system. However, three short days after its opening on July 31, 1993, over 180,000 St. Louisans had already done just that.

Like many transit agencies in the late 1980s, the Bi-State Development Agency (BSDA), St. Louis’s regional transit authority, was fighting declining market share and declining revenues. The agency decided to take a new tack, and crafted a 25-year transportation plan to link the entire metropolitan area. The keys to this re-direction were partnerships and a new way of seeing its passengers — as clients and customers.

The agency began by forging alliances with businesses, both large and small, civic associations, the university community, media, and all levels of government. A key partner at the start of the MetroLink project was Citizens for Modern Transit (CMT), a grassroots organization which instituted a speaker’s bureau to educate future passengers about light rail; met with communities along the route; obtained railroad rights-of-way and money to fund planning studies; and worked with BSDA to raise over \$750,000 in private funds to support the MetroLink marketing effort. BSDA also established the Arts in Transit program which facilitated artist involvement in the design of MetroLink and supported collaboration to enhance the transit system through public art and community development initiatives.

Community development opportunities became more visible once MetroLink was up and running: people noticed a lack of clear and convenient linkages between the light rail stations and the communities immediately adjacent.

Although successful as a transportation entity, this brand new system needed to become more community-friendly. As people discovered the potential for local revitalization and redevelopment, a second level of partnerships, aimed at retrofitting the stations, began to take shape.



Wagner Electric Factory reborn as The Cornerstone Partnership



Wagner Electric Factory - Before



Wellston MetroLink Platform

“Everything came together on Delmar Boulevard to try things a new way.”

—Joe Ebert,
Traffic engineer with the
City of St. Louis



Courtesy: Arts in Transit

Wellston Station

The MetroLink station in Wellston, a small, primarily African-American municipality surrounded by the City of St. Louis, was adjacent to a 24-acre decaying industrial site where an 11-year old child had been murdered only months after the station opened. This combination of events focused public attention on the site, which had been deeded to St. Louis County in 1983. The county responded by:

- Devising a redevelopment plan for this area that would be initiated by the transformation of a factory building into a state-of-the-art industrial training and education center, as well as a job placement center;
- Co-funding the design and construction of a childcare center adjacent to the station, funded in part by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA);
- Providing support to the newly formed Wellston Redevelopment Corporation, which plans to facilitate major industrial and residential development—including new housing construction—and land assembly to attract developers.

BSDA and the Arts in Transit program continue to work with the community to implement a wide range of site improvements, public art, and streetscape enhancements surrounding the station to create safer, more attractive pedestrian connections, and to facilitate improved vehicle access to the area.

Delmar Station

Residents of the Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood were concerned about their main street, Delmar Boulevard, long before MetroLink appeared, and had taken several steps to lure desired businesses to the area. However, the wide commercial street and fast-moving traffic continued to be dangerous to pedestrians.

In 1996, the community participated in a visioning charrette in conjunction with BSDA, Arts in Transit, and nearby Washington University, to develop a cohesive plan for the Delmar MetroLink station. Funded by pooling grants from BSDA, the City of St. Louis and a bordering municipality, University City, a comprehensive plan for the boulevard and station was developed.

Joe Ebert, traffic engineer with the City of St. Louis, found that there was excess capacity on the roadway, and that it could be narrowed to one lane in each direction with on-street parking, without creating congestion. This created the opportunity to attract new businesses and pedestrian activity by adding streetscape features, including:

- Bricked crosswalks, planted medians, and neckdowns at intersections to improve pedestrian safety and access;
- Widened sidewalks with improved lighting, landscaping and public art to attract new businesses and shoppers;
- Construction of a transit plaza at the Delmar MetroLink station to serve passengers transferring between rail and bus.

Construction is scheduled to begin in the fall of 1999.

5800 Block of Delmar Boulevard
Proposed design (above) and Existing
streets (below)



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Project Partners

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- MPOs
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Despite its international reputation as a livable city, when Portland, Oregon built its first “MAX” (Metropolitan Area Express) light rail line, transit stops were often located in unfriendly territory, such as on highway medians and below underpasses, hardly the best way to build a new community or nurture a sense of place. With the new 18-mile MAX on the city’s west side, Portland is doing things differently.

The Westside MAX connects several outlying suburbs with downtown Portland, and is located along some relatively undeveloped areas — creating laboratories, in effect, for the dense, pedestrian-focused development that fulfills Metro’s transit-supportive livability goals, while adding more main streets to the Portland landscape. But there is a catch: Tri-Met does not have land-use authority over most sites that adjoin its light rail stations— local municipalities control station-area development. Even when Tri-Met owns the occasional parcel next to a station, they undertake development based upon the community’s vision. **Success, therefore, depends upon local support for regional goals.**

Each of the seven communities along the Westside line received support from a pool of funds contributed by Metro (the regional government), Tri-Met, Oregon’s Department of Transportation, and the communities themselves, to hire or fund planners to create station-area plans that balance local needs and goals with regional objectives. By accepting these funds, the communities agree to share information and adopt transit-supportive



Jefferson Street Station

Photo: Courtesy Tri-Met

Jefferson Street Station

The site of the Jefferson Street light rail station in Portland’s Goose Hollow neighborhood is owned by Tri-Met and was home to two treasured historic trees. Saving the trees was a prerequisite for the neighborhood to accept more dense housing adjacent to the light rail station. But the grassroots group in Goose Hollow pushed for more. Tri-Met convened a Local Development Committee comprised of representatives from the city of Portland Planning Bureau, the neighborhood, and the transit agency, which designed the entire plan for all three parcels next to the station before a developer was even chosen for the project.

To determine whom potential homebuyers might be, the committee hired consultants to conduct in-depth interviews as part of the market research for the project. Then they hired an architect to design the buildings for the site, based on the community’s plan, and obtained design approval and unanimous endorsement by the neighborhood association. Only then were the results incorporated into a bid package used to select the developer. This made it possible for the developer to focus on implementing the best possible product, rather than struggling to obtain community consensus on the plan itself. This committee process proved so successful that Tri-Met is now using it for the development of other building projects.



Arbor Vista Condos

Photo: Courtesy Tri-Met

“We see our role as staying in the background, while the community figures out what will work given its specific situation. Then we can modify our plans to reinforce community objectives as needed.”

—G.B. Arriri
Director of Strategic



Arbor Vista rendering

Courtesy: Tri-Met



Photo: PacTrust

Orenco

“We needed leeway to produce a community with a strong enough sense of place to entice people out of their cars. The city agreed, allowing us to use ‘design, not formula.’”

—Mike Mehaffy,
Project Manager, PacTrust



Courtesy: Costa Pacific Homes

Orenco Station

The residents of a historic 24-block neighborhood in the city of Hillsboro feared negative traffic impacts on their community from the proposed Orenco MAX Station. Tri-Met agreed to move the station 600 feet, adjacent to a vacant 190-acre industrial site owned by the developer PacTrust. In order to justify the provision of transit service, Tri-Met required that the site be densely developed with pedestrian-oriented uses. The city of Hillsboro stepped in and established a one-half mile special overlay district to allow for residential and commercial uses on the site.

Familiar with and in support of Metro’s Region 2040 Plan, which requires that development taking place within Portland’s Urban Growth Boundary be transit-supportive, PacTrust (in collaboration with a residential developer, Costa Pacific Homes) agreed to develop the parcel according to Tri-Met’s objectives, even though it was a significant deviation from their traditional commercial development strategy. To plan this project, PacTrust joined with local residents and representatives of various city, regional and county public agencies, including Tri-Met and Metro. “What emerged,” explains planner Rajiv Batra,

who worked on the station area plan “was a community with a rail stop as the focus of pedestrian routes, services and public activities.” Mike Mehaffy of PacTrust credits the plan’s richness in part to the city’s willingness, even eagerness, to allow for innovations such as setting homes close to the street, and having two smaller parks rather than one central one.

Construction began in 1997, and PacTrust reports that sales and leasing are very strong.

The final plan for the town center incorporates:

- 80,000 square feet of retail with second floor residential and live-work units along a pedestrian-friendly, tree-lined street just up from the MAX station;
- 400 single-family townhomes and cottages;
- 1400 apartments;
- Two public parks;
- Public artworks.

When Orenco Station won the 1999 Master Planned Community of the Year Award from the National Association of Home Builders, PacTrust asked that the city be named co-recipient of the award.



View of Orenco from Station Platform

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Here are a few ideas to get you started on a place-making transportation program and to help you generate your own transportation and community partnerships:

1. **Go out “into the field.”** Take a walk around the community. Visit transit and transportation facilities and observe what kinds of activities occur there. Talk to people, and ask them what works and what doesn’t work about the place. Listen to their suggestions. Through this process, you will develop a better understanding about how a place operates and how it can be improved.
2. **Seek out partners.** If you are with a transportation agency, reach out to community organizations, businesses, and local officials to elicit their ideas and opinions - and support. If you are with a community organization, get in touch with the staff of your transportation or transit agency. Invite them for a tour or site visit of an existing or proposed project. Discuss ways of working together to plan, design, and implement a project.
3. **Develop a shared vision for the project.** Address the future needs of the community and of the transportation agency; and specify short- and longer-term goals, immediate actions steps, and additional partners. Seek ways to solve problems, overcome obstacles, and innovate and identify a range of funding sources that may be available to the community or to the transportation agency.
4. **Get started.** Implement some short-term projects by experimenting with low-cost improvements. Collaboratively plan special events, cleanups, and beautification projects, and make simple physical improvements to transportation facilities, streets, and the areas adjacent to them. Invite the public to help.
5. **Keep the big picture in mind.** Make more major changes using short-term projects as stepping stones. Use the partnership as a mechanism for addressing the broader livability and environmental concerns of the community.



E Street Before



E Street with angled parking

A traffic calming demonstration project on E Street transformed the southern edge of a new central square into a more lively commercial street. San Bernardino, CA



*Jazz Festival and Market
NJ Transit Station
East Orange, NJ*

For More Information

Credits

The Role of Transit In Creating Livable Metropolitan Communities (TCRP Report 22), Transit Cooperative Research Program, National Academy Press, Washington, DC (1997).

About the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP)

TCRP serves as one of the principal means by which the transit industry can develop innovative near-term solutions to meet demands placed on it. TCRP was established in 1992 and is a cooperative program among the Federal Transit Administration, the Transportation Research Board, and the Transit Development Corporation, Inc.

About Project for Public Spaces, Inc.

Project for Public Spaces, Inc. (PPS) is a non-profit corporation specializing in the planning, design and management of public spaces. Founded in 1975, PPS has completed projects in over 850 communities throughout the United States and abroad and has become widely known for its innovative approach to public space planning and community revitalization that focuses on the behavior, expressed needs and collaborative envisioning of community members.

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www.apta.com



Project for Public Spaces, Inc.:
The Role of Transit In Creating Livable Metropolitan Communities (TCRP Report 22), Transit Cooperative Research Program, National Academy Press, Washington, DC (1997).

The Role of Transit in Creating Livable Metropolitan Communities, a nine-minute companion video to the book.

Transit-Friendly Streets: Design and Traffic Management Strategies to Support Livable Communities (TCRP Report 33), Transit Cooperative Research Program, National Academy Press, Washington, DC (1998).

The Transit Amenity Handbook and The Transit Design Game Workbook (TCRP Report 46), Transit Cooperative Research Program, National Academy Press, Washington, DC (available Fall 1999).