Place-Defining Ridership-Building TOD: Thinking Beyond the Station To Create Community-Friendly Transit
We shape our buildings and thereafter, our buildings shape us.  — Winston Churchill
We shape our transportation systems and thereafter, our transportation shapes us.

— Transportation and Livable Communities Consortium
What Makes a Great Transit Place?

**sociability**
- street life
- evening use
- volunteerism

**uses & activities**
- business ownership
- property values
- land-use patterns

**access & linkages**
- transit usage
- pedestrian activity
- parking usage patterns

**comfort & image**
- safety
- charm
- attractiveness

**Key Attributes**
- welcoming
- cooperative
- neighborly

**Intangibles**
- fun
- active
- vital

**Measurements**
- special
- real
- connected
- walkable
- convenient
- accessible

- historic
- clean
- attractible

- crime stats
- sanitation rating
- building conditions
- environmental data
The Placemaking Process around Transit
Crisis driven, Politically initiated
Relies on professionals and “experts”
Expensive
Community is resistant
Narrow Goals
Static designs
Results in limited experience of place
“Each profession has become its own audience.”
-- Pope Coleman
• Empowers Communities
• Attracts partners, money & creative solutions
• Professionals become resources
• Design supports uses
• Solutions are flexible
• Engagement and commitment grow
A Tale of Two Libraries
When you plan your community around cars and traffic...you get cars and traffic.
The erosion of cities by automobiles proceeds as a kind of nibbling. Small nibbles at first but eventually hefty bites. A street is widened here, another is straightened there, a wide avenue is converted to one way flow and more land goes into parking. No one step in this process is in itself crucial but cumulatively the effect is enormous.

— Jane Jacobs, 1954
In the 18 years from 1977 to 1995, when the population increased 20 percent, the number of annual per capita long-distance trips increased 56 percent and the number of local trips increased 47 percent.

—BUILDING A 21ST-CENTURY TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM, NGA Center for Best Practices
When you design your community around people and places... you get people and places.
Typical conditions

- Over-sized parking lots separate commercial buildings from streets.
- Pedestrian hostile public streets.
- Sidewalks do not connect to buildings.
- Pedestrians discouraged from walking to adjacent businesses.
- Transit service ineffective (Buildings too far from street, results in long walks and inefficient routing).
- Development lacks public space or amenity (park/plaza).

Slide courtesy of Troy Russ, Glatting Jackson.
Public investment

Streetscape improvements invite pedestrians to public street

Access management minimizes driveways and curb cuts

Slide courtesy of Troy Russ, Glatting Jackson
Public park and continued street orientation

New development continues to build to the street

Density and location of buildings support public transit

- Shared “park once” environment is created

Public/private park improvements create a valuable amenity

Slide courtesy of Troy Russ, Glatting Jackson
Orenco Station, Portland, OR
Mountainview, CA
Englewood, CO
San Mateo County, CA

Commercial-Retail Uses
Vancouver, BC
Gaslight Commons
South Orange NJ
Benefits of a Placemaking Approach for Community Supportive Transit

- Transit stations become community assets and destinations
- Pressure to increase parking capacity is reduced
- Station areas become more desirable as places to live and operate businesses
- Ridership increases – alleviating auto dependence
- Real estate near train stations becomes more valuable
- Opportunities for partnering with other agencies, cities and civic groups
- A sense of ownership is generated in the community
- Transit investments and assets are leveraged to achieve community benefits
Cities of the Future

Civic Spaces
Community Gathering Spaces/Parks

- City Hall
- Churches
- Schools
- Community Center
- Theatres/Museums
- Library
- Coffee Shop
- Hospital
- Offices
- Transit
Thinking Beyond the Station Workshop

TRB Best Practices

1. What are the Qualities and Characteristics of well-designed, managed and sited transit facilities that work for communities?

2. What are the barriers to making this happen – from the land use side? From the transit planning/transit agency side? From the private sector perspective?

3. Where do the gaps in knowledge exist? What kinds of research, education, training is needed (and for whom)?

4. How can we incentivize the kinds of uses that can help catalyze transit ridership while capturing the value of public transportation investments through new development? What policies may need to change or be created to enable this to happen?
About 18 Strategies for creating community supportive, community-friendly transit facilities

Qualities and Characteristics of Community and Place-Supportive Transit
Rail stations and bus stops can serve as community focal points while providing a safe, comfortable, and attractive experience for transit passengers.
Create active, attractive, community public spaces at stations that attract people on a regular basis, at various times of day and days of week.
Plan and design bus, rail and light rail stations to function as community destinations.
Use transit facilities to build a sense of community by programming them as venues for a wide range of community activities and events.
Provide amenities and retail such as news/sundry stands, coffee carts, comfortable seating, restrooms, and information kiosks to create a positive experience for residents and commuters alike.
Cluster amenities in and around centralized areas to create synergy and enhance their impact.
Make sure the station is attractive and visible from a distance.
Provide an on site management presence: 80% of the success of a good public space is attributable to its management.
Create a Lively Mix

Use transit to revitalize existing downtowns, attract new businesses, and create lively public spaces that establish districts which become desirable places to live. Lively mixed-use neighborhoods leverage transit service, infrastructure, and investment.
Manage transit facilities to serve as anchors for local businesses, and as small business incubators.
Update zoning codes and design guidelines to create pedestrian-oriented buildings that combine housing and commercial uses around transit stations.
Encourage the construction of mixed use buildings that combine housing and commercial activity with active ground floor uses.
Create new parks and plazas as part of new transit-oriented development.
Design parking facilities to be less visually intrusive and plan for shared use.
Design Great Boulevards and Transit-Friendly Streets

Roads, streets, and transit stops are public spaces and places that can benefit communities socially, economically, and environmentally.
Redesign automobile corridors adjacent to transit facilities as pedestrian-friendly boulevards.
Make commuter transfers between train, buses and cars a convenient and pleasant experience.
Create safe and pleasant ways for pedestrians and bicyclists to get to the station - from many directions.
Get people walking to transit by making streets attractive, comfortable, and safe.
Optimize the use of signs and information to help people find their way to the correct bus or train and destination, and to promote local businesses and attractions.
Design grade-separation projects so that they create connections, rather than barriers, in a community.
Thinking Beyond the Station Workshop

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