Seattle Transit Communities
Integrating Neighborhoods with Transit

A report from the Seattle Planning Commission
The Seattle Planning Commission

Working to enhance the quality of life in Seattle.
Transit is Transformational

- Optimize local and regional investment in transit.
- Create livable communities around transit connections.
- Align land use policies and capital investments.
Our Report

Provides a road map for how to create vital transit communities.
Our Report

- Describes four Seattle-specific typologies.
- Identifies the essential components of livability.
- Outlines key funding and implementation strategies.
- Recommends how to transform our communities.
- Identifies 14 near-term opportunities.
Livability Elements

- parks
- plazas
- wayfinding
- libraries
- community centers
- green streets
- bike facilities
What Makes a Successful Transit Community?

- Services.
- Infrastructure.
- Livability elements.
Defining Success

Optimize transit investments.

Focus land use policies to maximize benefits.

Build the livability elements.
Benefits of Transit Communities

- Lower overall household costs.
- Improve public health.
- Support diversity.
- Enhance local business districts.
- Reduce carbon footprint.
- Preserve regional open space and natural resource lands.

photo by Lara Swimmer
41 nodes

4 typologies

14 priority communities
41*4*14

41 nodes

4 typologies

14 priority communities
41 nodes

4 typologies

14 priority communities

Priority Transit Communities & Frequent Transit Service

TYPOLOGIES
- Mixed Use Neighborhoods
- Industrial Job Centers
- Mixed Use Centers
- Mixed Use Center/Special District

TRANSIT SERVICE BY ROUTE FREQUENCY
- <15 minute headways existing
- <15 minute headways planned & funded
- >15 minute headways existing
Mixed Use Centers

- mixed use center
- mixed use neighborhood
- special district
- industrial job center
Mixed Use Centers

- A local or regional hub with jobs, residents, and services.
- A variety of retail and commercial activities.
- Civic and recreational amenities.
Mixed Use Neighborhoods

- mixed use center
- mixed use neighborhood
- special district
- industrial job center
Mixed Use Neighborhoods

- Shopping, dining, and recreation mostly attract locals.

- Most residents work in other neighborhoods.

- Schools, libraries, and community centers are prominent.
Special Districts

- mixed use center
- mixed use neighborhood
- special district
- industrial job center
Special Districts

- Major institutions, entertainment districts, sports arenas, or multimodal hubs.
- Large groups of people move in and out of the area during peak activities.
- Wayfinding is critical.
Industrial Jobs Centers

- mixed use center
- mixed use neighborhood
- special district
- industrial job centers
Industrial Jobs Centers

- Large and small industrial businesses often operate 24 hours per day.

- Residential uses prohibited; non-industrials uses discouraged.

- Balance pedestrian and bike connections with freight mobility.

photo by Z T Jackson
Prioritization

- Land use readiness.
- Transit readiness.
- Geographic and social equity.
14 Priority Communities

- Ballard
- Broadway
- Broadview
- Columbia City
- King Street Station
- Mt. Baker
- Northgate
- Othello
- Rainier Beach
- Roosevelt
- South Lake Union
- The Junction
- University District
- Uptown
Recommendations

- Strengthen Comprehensive Plan policies.
- Revise zoning.
- Update the land use code.
- Improve access to transit.
- Encourage diverse households.
- Support carbon neutrality.
- Leverage funding and collaboration.
- Prioritize greatest near-term priorities.
Broadway

Mixed use center: needs station area/implementation plan.

Build on existing planning efforts.

Change land use policies to optimize transit investment.
Online toolkit highlights funding and implementation strategies for public and private sectors.
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A report from the Seattle Planning Commission
Place Typology, TOD, and Transportation Planning
Oregon Washington APA Conference

October 20, 2011
Presented by...

New urban roots

Building typology

Why categorize places?
Visioning
Comprehensive Planning and Growth Management
Corridor Planning
Comparative Analysis of Urban Form or Function
Performance Measurement and Investment Prioritization

Place typology - dimensionality
- Character
- Diversity
- Accessibility
- Fit & function
- Consistency & variety
- Legibility
- Structure
- Features
- Social Fabric
- Sustainability

typology

taxonomic classification based on one or set of characteristics

usually based on physical characteristics, but can be used to describe market, form, or functional characteristics of a current or future place.
place typology - dimensionality

- Character
- Diversity
- Accessibility
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Typology applications

- Transit Oriented Developments
- Urban Streets

typology in TOD planning

Denver

Portland Metro TOD Strategic Plan

- Strategically target TOD investments
- Respond to market fluctuations
- Build partnerships

building the typology

- Market Activity: sales per sq foot demonstrates achievable development types

+ Urban Form + Activity (TOD Score): composite index of the existing population base and physical and transit infrastructure
5 Ps of transit orientation

- Residents + employees per acre
- Average block size
- Physical form
- Places
- Urban living infrastructure
- Transit service during peak hours
- Access to sidewalks & shoulders

transit orientation

transit orientation score

People

Performance

Pedestrian/Bicycle

Plan

Physical Form

Hollywood

Gresham Central
Hillsboro Central

Gateway

cluster analysis

investment priorities

Portland Metro

beyond street types

10/27/2011
complete street types

Urban 3-Lane Avenue

complete street types

Neighborhood Arterial

Seattle context

- Physically constrained region
  - Puget Sound & Lake Washington
  - Limited highway & bridge ROW
  - Limited budget for infrastructure
- Interest in smart growth
  - Minimization of traffic & impacts
  - Generalization of urban efficiency
  - Frequent Transit Network

the problems

- Focus on automobile has resulted in declining person network capacity
- Increased pressure for more road space by pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users
- Engineers have limited tools for evaluating reallocations
- Result: Decisions are political, informed only by who screams the loudest

travel markets

- Commute = 1
- Other = 7

Typical household trip making

Daily Round Trips
- Commute = 1
- Other = 7
Typology Take Aways

- Powerful visioning tool
- Can be confusing if purpose is not clear
- One tool within effective system planning constructs
- Merge with system planning

Thank You

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