



Seattle Station Area Planning

Transit-Oriented Development in Other Cities

Seattle's light rail system will not be the first on the West Coast. The BART system built in the San Francisco Bay Area in the 1960s was the first regional rail system constructed in the U.S. in more than 50 years. Since then, urban rail systems have been completed in ten U.S. cities on the West Coast and in Vancouver, B.C. These cities have had varying levels of success in attracting transit-oriented development around the rail stations. Seattle can learn from these experiences, taking advantage of the opportunities presented and avoiding the mistakes made elsewhere.

To understand what tools work best to encourage transit-oriented development, we need to compare Seattle's station areas with similar areas and evaluate what makes most sense for this city and our neighborhoods. The chart on the next page shows some relevant North American cases of transit-oriented development as they relate to specific station types and the tools to make development happen. In looking for examples comparable to Seattle, specific station area characteristics need to be evaluated: whether the station is underground, at-grade or elevated, how many people use the station, and what other transportation connections are provided. This summary is the first step. Here are some preliminary findings:



Station Area Planning: All types of station areas benefit from planning, but the greatest results come when station area planning is carried out through zoning, public improvements, development financing packages, and effective marketing programs, as in Portland, San Jose, and the Hayward and Fruitvale BART station areas. Where station development plans are overly restrictive and do not relate to market conditions, as in some Washington, DC communities, transit-oriented development does not occur.



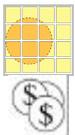
Pedestrian-Supportive Infrastructure: Pedestrian amenities, links with shopping centers as at the El Cerrito and Fruitvale BART stations and some San Diego stations, and other improvements, as in Downtown Portland, San Diego, San Francisco and Vancouver, coupled with zoning that requires rain-protection and other features enhance the pedestrian environment. Direct pedestrian connections between office buildings and rail stations, as in San Diego and San Francisco, improve transit access.



Parking Management and Shared Parking: Parking "lids" in Downtown Portland and reduced parking requirements in Sacramento have helped make transit-oriented development viable. Shared parking structures have also been built, although developers may be reluctant to participate. Also notable is that BART's requirement for 1:1 replacement parking has hampered joint development prospects.



Zoning and Expedited Development Review: Overlay districts, use controls, building standards and requirements for pedestrian facilities help tailor zoning to station areas in Portland, Sacramento, San Francisco and San Diego. Adequate zoning, coupled with reduced parking requirements, helps attract transit-oriented development. "Fast-track" permit approvals have helped development around the Washington, DC Metro stations, while "umbrella" environmental review has shortened the review time around some BART stations where projects conform to station area plans.



Public Assistance: Redevelopment agencies have helped transit-oriented development in Oakland, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, and Portland, both with land assembly and financing. However, legal constraints may limit the scope of assistance that can be offered. In general, public investments can build confidence in the process and spur additional investments in station areas. Community facilities, such as day care and street beautification, also help. Finally, the public sector must be willing to support TOD with economic development policies where local real estate markets are weak.



Local Transit Service: Neighborhood access routes and "timed-transfer" arrangements, as in Portland, Vancouver, Tacoma, San Francisco and San Diego, help improve access to local businesses and employment centers. They also support the regional rail transit, commuter rail, and express bus systems.



Promoting Transit-Oriented Development: North American Examples

Station Types	Seattle Stations	Relevant TOD Cases								
Shopping Center/ Terminus	Northgate	SF East Bay: El Cerrito BART Portland: Gresham Tacoma: Park & Ride	✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓ ✓ ✓		✓ ✓	✓	✓ ✓	✓
Existing Neighborhood Commercial Center	Roosevelt NE 45th Street Capitol Hill South McClellan Street	San Jose: North First Street DC: Connecticut Ave. Red Line Vancouver, BC SF East Bay: Hayward BART	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓ ✓	
Residential Neighborhood without Commercial Center	Columbia City South Edmunds Street South Othello Street South Henderson Street	San Jose: Older neighborhoods San Diego: La Mesa, Barrio Logan SF East Bay: Fruitvale BART	✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓		✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	
Major Institution/ Campus	NE 45th Street NE Campus Parkway NE Pacific Street Capitol Hill First Hill	San Diego: Balboa Park DC: American University, UDC	✓ ✓		✓		✓	✓		
Central Business District	Convention Place Westlake University Street Pioneer Square International District	San Diego: Center City East San Francisco: Transbay Terminal Portland: North of Pioneer Place Vancouver, BC: Downtown stations	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓		✓ ✓ ✓ ✓		✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
Special Purpose District/Sports	Seattle Center Pioneer Square International District Royal Brougham	Vancouver: Expo'86 area San Diego: Balboa Park Portland: Rose Garden SL East Bay: Oakland Coliseum San Francisco: Third Street MUNI	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓		✓ ✓	✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
Commercial/ Industrial	Eastlake/ South Lake Union South Dearborn Street	Vancouver: SkyTrain industrial sites Portland: Industrial areas near river	✓ ✓	✓	✓		✓ ✓		✓ ✓	✓ ✓
Near Freeway	Northgate Roosevelt Eastlake I-90 at Rainier	Portland: Banfield stations Sacramento: North Line	✓	✓	✓		✓ ✓		✓	✓ ✓
Multi-Modal Hub	Northgate International District	DC: Silver Spring, MD Transit Center San Diego: American Plaza Los Angeles: Union Station	✓ ✓ ✓							✓ ✓ ✓

Key to TOD Implementation Tools



Station Area Planning



Pedestrian-Supportive Infrastructure



Parking Management and Shared Parking



Expedited Permits and Reviews



Rezoning



Public Assistance in Land Assembly



Direct Public Investment in Projects



Local Transit Service Design