

**Building Livable
Communities:
Enhancing Economic
Competitiveness in Los Angeles**

Los Angeles Business Council
Institute

Identified Problems

- the need for workforce housing – housing that is affordable to households earning between 50% and 120% of Area Median Income (AMI) of \$53,000, or between about \$26,500 and \$63,600 – remains critically high throughout the County
- planning efforts need to focus on transit corridors – not Transit Oriented Developments (TODs) – to promote long-term development of livable communities that integrate residential, commercial, and everyday amenities through an integrated transit network.

Justification for Recommendations

- Concurrently, the public transportation sector – backed by Measure R—is making an unprecedented push to reshape transit infrastructure across the region. Over the next 30 years and potentially beyond, an estimated \$40 billion or more of tax revenues will be committed to expanding and enhancing Los Angeles’ transit system.

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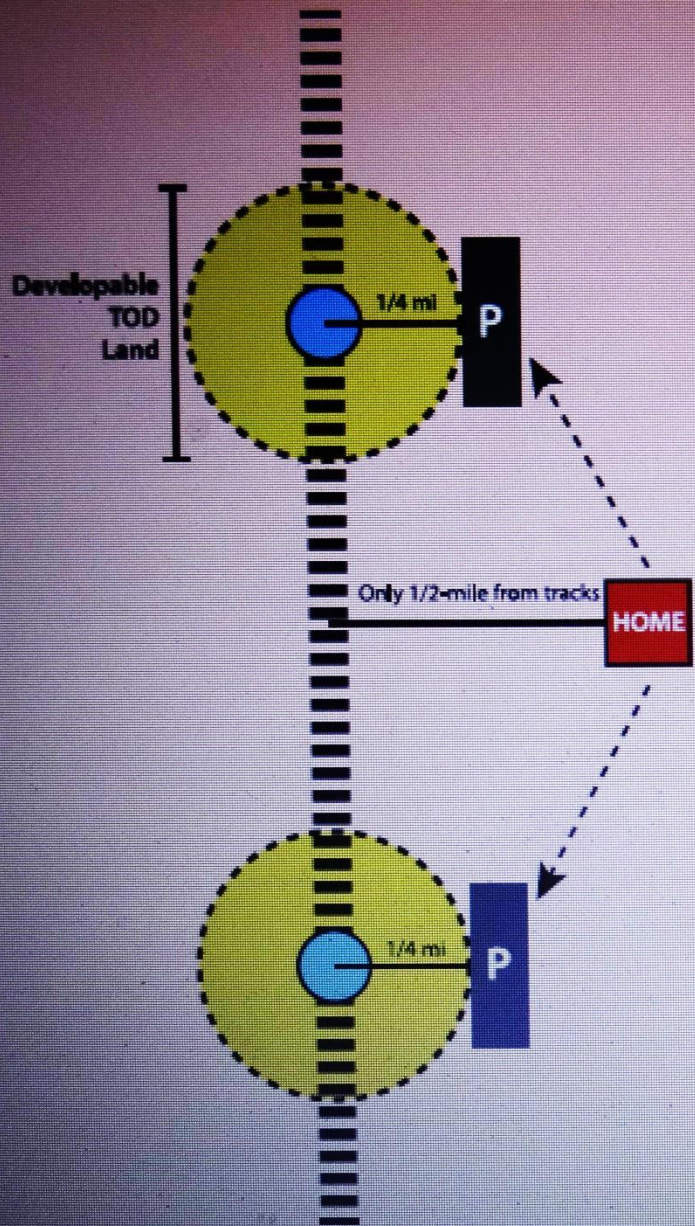
- With significant investments in transportation infrastructure throughout Los Angeles County being made now and far into the future, housing and jobs are no longer required to be co-located and can instead be built across a larger area, creating livable corridors around an expanding transit system.

Multi Mobility Hubs

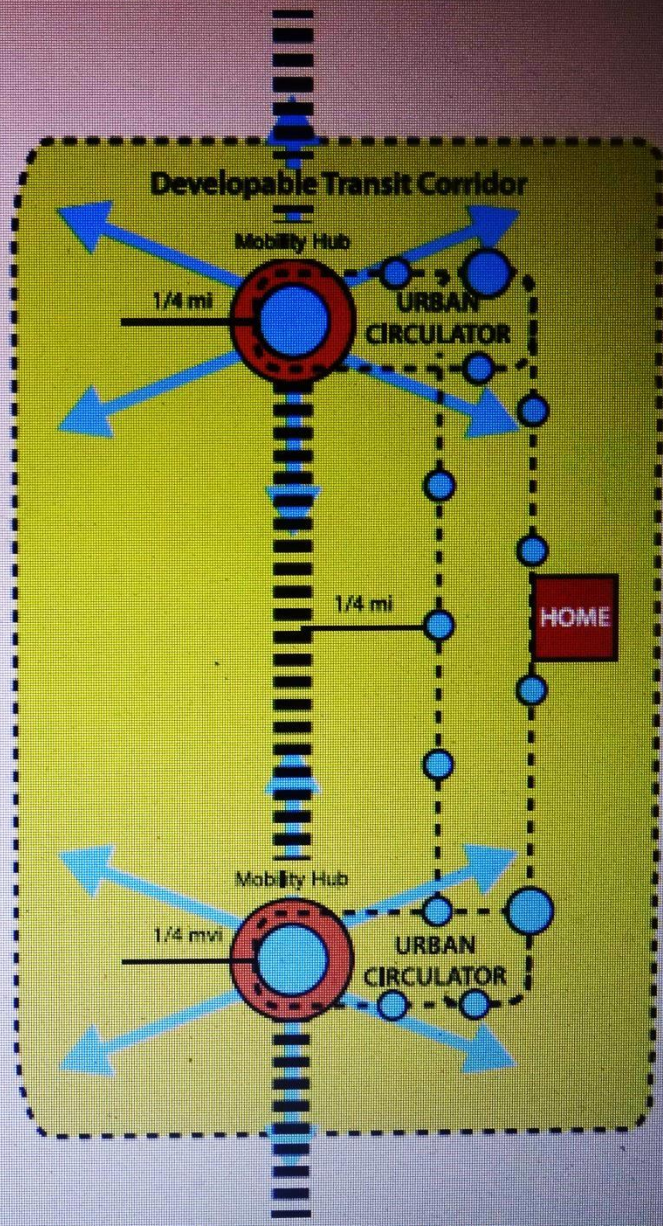
- As an alternative to more costly light rail or fixed-guideway transit investments, Metro, along with several cities in Los Angeles County, is looking to develop mobility hubs that will increase accessibility to the County's rail system and enhance connectivity in transit-adjacent communities.
- These mobility hubs will include various modes of personal transportation, including bicycles, electric bikes, scooters, and shared cars, and they will be connected into the technology grid via Wi-Fi and GPS services (City of Los Angeles, 2010).
- The revenues from these "Local Return" programs that would result from the passage of Measure J would provide a source of funds to develop mobility hubs and other first mile / last mile connections across Los Angeles County.

Multi Mobility Hubs

- Figure 5 shows how the addition of a first/last mile transit system, in this case a mobility hub, to the traditional TOD model can vastly increase the amount of developable land around transit and enhance existing housing's connection to transit.
- Further, increasing this developable footprint allows for the development of workforce housing on less expensive plots of land, diminishing the need for excessive subsidies or gap financing tools in order to develop new workforce housing.



Traditional TOD Model



Transit Corridor Model with Circulator & Mobility Hub

1. Invest in the Development of Livable Corridors Along Transit

- Modify land use policy to reduce obstacles for quality, mixed-income or true mixed-use housing near transit.
- Create zones where private sector developers encounter little to no entitlement risk, and provide incentives to reduce unit cost, such as parking reductions and density bonuses.
- Work with private organizations to generate new sources of funds that seek lower than market returns on workforce housing projects in target areas.

2. Foster Private Development – and Capitalize on It

- Modify land use policy to reduce obstacles for quality, mixed-income or true mixed-use housing near transit.
- Create zones where private sector developers encounter little to no entitlement risk, and provide incentives to reduce unit cost, such as parking reductions and density bonuses.
- Work with private organizations to generate new sources of funds that seek lower than market returns on workforce housing projects in target areas.

3. Emphasize Development of Mixed-Income Housing Near Transit:

- The investment in transit and livable corridors has an unintended consequence of putting upward pressure on property values near transit assets. As a result, development efforts price out lower-income households who have a higher propensity to use and rely on transit.
- Local jurisdictions must make a commitment to support new mixed income housing around transit investments, and because of the increased costs of building near transit this will only be accomplished through a combination of innovative policies and public investment.

4. Plan for Employment-Generating Land Uses:

- Public agencies must work to enable land uses that promote job creation in addition to enabling residential land uses in proximity to transit corridors.
- Achieving a successful jobs-to-housing balance by simply “increasing the denominator” is an artificial solution to a much more significant issue.

5. Empower Public Agencies to Act as Development Agencies

- Public agencies should be more directly involved in the development process, to help fill the vacancy created in the absence of redevelopment agencies.