



Where is the

**M**etropolitan

**T**ransit

**T**ransportation

On

**O**riented

**A**uthority

**D**evelopment?

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	i
INTRODUCTION.....	1
BENEFITS OF TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT.....	4
OBSTACLES TO TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT.....	7
FINDINGS.....	8
New York State.....	8
New York Metropolitan Transportation Council.....	10
Metropolitan Transportation Authority.....	12
Metro-North Railroad.....	16
Long Island Rail Road.....	24
New York City Transit.....	29
OTHER STATES AND AGENCIES.....	33
New Jersey.....	33
Oregon.....	36
California.....	38
Washington DC.....	42
CONCLUSIONS.....	44
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	48
APPENDIX A.....	56

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Public transportation ridership has increased significantly in the last several years in the United States, reversing a half century pattern of decline. This resurgence has been attributed to higher fuel costs and the rising cost of commuting by private automobile, but is also due to demographic changes, such as immigration and the aging of the population, as well as a renewed interest in more compact settlement patterns. Ridership has increased substantially in the New York region as well. To support this ridership growth many communities have created a linkage between land use practices and transportation facilities.

An important tool in making transit a primary option for mobility is Transit Oriented Development (TOD). Transit Oriented Development is a pedestrian-friendly, compact, mixed-use development pattern that is within walking distance of a transit station and contains or adjoins a core commercial area. Transit Oriented Development falls under the general category of Smart Growth, which involves the creation of a spatially compact mix of uses and residential styles with a strong sense of place and an emphasis on the conservation of natural, cultural, and land resources.

A well designed TOD program can complement a well run transit system. Research data show that the localities that have implemented TOD land use practices have experienced impressive ridership gains. This coordination allows transit providers to go beyond examining the quality of passengers' experiences while in their systems and lets them examine other factors that can affect customers' satisfaction and willingness to use the transit system.

The MTA region is particularly suited to Transit Oriented Development because of its vast transportation infrastructure. In September 2004, Reconnecting America, a prominent national TOD advocacy organization, noted that the New York metropolitan area is expected to create more demand for additional housing within one half mile of a transit station than any other metropolitan area. Much of New York City functions very successfully as a natural TOD. Subway stations are often hubs of activity, and patterns similar to transit villages have developed in many neighborhoods. The best of these city areas exemplify the dense, mixed use, walkable character that TODs seek to achieve through careful planning.

The MTA and its operating agencies could further their interests by substantially increasing their support for Transit Oriented Development. TOD opportunities can generate revenue from developers that use MTA properties and create a stable base of new ridership for the railroads. Some of this new ridership may be added outside of peak hours or in the reverse peak direction due to the mixture of uses typical in TODs.

## FINDINGS

The PCAC examined New York State, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council's (NYMTC), and MTA policies and actions related to Transit Oriented Development. We found a number of promising initial steps moving toward TOD and several successful initiatives, but also a need to focus and coordinate efforts to link land use patterns and transportation.

### **NEW YORK STATE**

While New York State offers a number of diverse incentives to encourage Smart Growth, it does not have the capacity to measure the performance of their recipients, nor does it coordinate state policies or spending to further Smart Growth objectives. Inter-agency coordination and performance evaluation are lacking in New York State. The State has not directly addressed the issue of Transit Oriented Development and thus has failed to capitalize upon the potential economic gains that could be leveraged from the enormous capital investment made in the MTA network over the past quarter century.

New Jersey, Washington DC, Oregon, and California have all created agencies and policies to foster Smart Growth and TOD through a coordinated multi-departmental approach. As a result, substantially more TOD projects have been successfully developed in these areas than in New York State. Despite legislation instituting a series of planning reforms in the 1990s, more recent efforts to enact several Smart Growth proposals in New York State have not been successful. Efforts to make planning more effective have since been conducted through the executive branch.

This action has been limited in its effectiveness. New York State's Quality Communities Interagency Task Force (QCITF), created in 2000 to study the issues that affect the creation of community visions, has seen only one of its forty-one recommendations implemented. This recommendation involved the establishment of a Quality Communities Clearinghouse website. The New York State Department of Transportation's Long Island Transportation Plan to Manage Congestion (LITP 2000), which has been roundly criticized by transportation advocacy groups, relies on roadway expansions and a sketchy bus rapid transit system but fails to link land use and transportation or to take full advantage of the Long Island Rail Road in addressing Long Island's transportation issues. The Hudson River Greenway Act, which provides incentives for communities in a fourteen county area that seek to implement smart growth solutions to development issues, may be a model upon which the state can build a supporting structure for Transit Oriented Development.

## **NEW YORK METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL (NYMTC)**

The New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) is the federally authorized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for New York City, Long Island and the lower Hudson River Valley area. It is a regional council of governments whose voting members include the Counties of Nassau, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk, and Westchester, together with the MTA, New York City Department of Planning (NYCDPC), New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) and the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT).

NYMTC provides a forum for interagency cooperation and public input into transportation planning and is mandated by the federal government to determine how federal transportation funds will be spent in the New York MPO region. NYMTC also sponsors and conducts studies, assists county planning agencies, and monitors compliance with national air quality standards. It is required to produce a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which articulates the region's transportation needs and desires over a minimum of a twenty-year period. Unfortunately, the RTP is not firmly grounded in a linkage of transportation and land use, nor does NYMTC's listing of planned projects, contained in the document *Transportation Improvement Projects for 2005-2010*, link land use with transportation. Further, the Plan relies upon the LITP 2000 in establishing priorities for transportation improvements on Long Island. NYMTC's pilot Sustainable Development Studies, however, do address the relationship between transportation and land use.

Fortunately, NYMTC has embarked upon new efforts to develop a regional vision for the New York metropolitan region to form the basis for future transportation planning. Initially, the Council has developed a set of shared goals for the region; drawing upon these goals the Council will identify a set of growth areas within the region. Most importantly, these goals and growth areas can provide a firm foundation for targeting new transportation investment through the NYMTC area. These new developments are a good beginning.

## **METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MTA)**

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority Headquarters (MTAHQ) provides support to its affiliated agencies and subsidiaries. Outside of MTAHQ, the MTA affiliated agencies and subsidiaries are generally organized functionally, with individual operating agencies responsible for providing a specific set of services. For example, the Long Island Rail Road operates commuter rail service between Long Island and New York City and MTA Bridges and Tunnels operates the Authority's bridge and tunnel facilities.

Within MTA Headquarters the most relevant areas of MTAHQ support for TOD lie in the Real Estate and Planning Departments, and the Grant Management office of the Capital Program Management Department. These departments respond to requests for support from the agencies. The MTA Planning Department works with the operating agencies on planning processes leading to the development of the Authority's five year Capital Programs and is thus a natural point for the coordination of activities between MTA Headquarters and operating agencies. The degree to which MTA Planning works with the operating agencies varies, and there is potential for the Planning Department to have a greater involvement in TOD issues within the MTA family

The MTA Real Estate Department recognizes the importance of TOD, and many of its staff members support and have a detailed understanding of TOD concepts. The Department's staffing limitations, however, restrict its ability to pursue TOD goals. Despite increasing demands on the Department as a result of a number of large system improvement and expansion projects and the need to manage a diverse portfolio of MTA assets, the Real Estate Department's staffing has remained steady for the past twenty years. The Department explores a number of TOD opportunities in properties for which it is responsible and works to acquire land adjacent to MTA owned properties when the opportunity arises despite staff limitations. The Real Estate Department is currently conducting a survey to better identify the full extent of MTA's ownership of real property, which will improve its ability to pursue TOD goals.

MTA Grants Management could further assist the effort to promote TOD by vigorously pursuing available Transit Oriented Development funding. The FHWA's Transportation, Community and System Preservation Program (TCSP) funding has been available since 1999. While the MTA has not applied for the funding in the past, they have said they would be interested in future funding opportunities

## **THE OPERATING AGENCIES**

### **Metro-North Railroad**

We found Metro-North Railroad (MNR) to be proactive in its approach to MTAHQ on development issues. The Railroad maintains regular contact with relevant MTAHQ departments with regard to project development ideas, problem solving, and funding resources. The results of this collaborative relationship can be seen in the successful MNR Smart Growth Strategic Intermodal Facilities and TOD projects.

Metro-North believes that bringing MTA Headquarters into a project at its inception insures that levels of expertise available at the MTA inform the process from the beginning. As the Railroad identifies locations that have favorable indicators for a TOD project, station development options, and beneficial income strategies, the Real Estate Department is able to further clarify property issues pertaining to their locations. This collaborative relationship between Metro-North and the MTA has resulted in advancing the most TOD projects and Smart Growth Strategic Intermodal Facility initiatives within the MTA family.

This process has resulted in several noteworthy projects, including the Beacon Station Area Master Plan and its associated development and the Poughkeepsie Station and Structured parking project. Metro-North has sought to build upon these successes by working with local governments and developers on potential projects at Harrison, Ossining, and Sleepy Hollow, as well as at Harlem Valley-Wingdale and Greystone. Metro-North also works to create an environment for TOD through its Station Net Leasing program and through station area improvements that improve access and convenience for the surrounding community.

### **Long Island Rail Road**

The Long Island Rail Road is not as proactive in its dealings with MTAHQ and appears to take a more narrow approach to their relationship. MTA Planning is not as closely involved with developing a strategy for LIRR capital projects until the environmental impact study stage of a project. The LIRR prefers to develop plans with the assistance of the MTA's Legal Department to ensure that any legal requirements are fulfilled. Once plan development is well underway using in-house resources and consultants, the LIRR then begins to work more actively with MTA Planning. LIRR engages the MTA Real Estate Department in the course of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) process to address issues related to the acquisition of real property.

A notable project in which the LIRR has played a leadership role is the Mineola Intermodal Center. The Center includes a parking garage accommodating 955 cars and 7 Bays for MTA Long Island Bus buses, as well as separate offices for



Garage Management, Long Island Bus, and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Police. The garage is designed to complement the proposed Mineola Downtown Revitalization Plan and its immediate surroundings and is connected to station platforms and the ground level by an enclosed pedestrian overpass. The ADA compliant project provides for improved transfers between cars, trains, buses, and nearby taxis.

While the Mineola Intermodal Center is a valuable project, perhaps more important for the future of Transit Oriented Development is the process by which it was integrated into the community's plans. The LIRR received a \$25 million grant from the Federal Transit Administration to further Transit Oriented Development projects on Long Island. After discussing this funding with communities on Long Island, the Rail Road chose to use the grant for planning activities in Mineola. These funds assisted in the development of the *Mineola Area Revitalization Study*, which addressed the downtown area. As this study forms the basis of the downtown element of the Village's master plan, Mineola officials credit the Rail Road as the main force behind the transportation element of the master plan. This is a valuable precedent for future LIRR activities.

The LIRR has undertaken a number of station and access improvements that may foster TOD in the surrounding communities. There continues to be a need for improved coordination between the LIRR and state and local governments; as an example, wayfinding signage identifying routes to stations, which falls under the jurisdiction of state and local authorities, has not yet been installed in most of the LIRR service area. Also, an excellent opportunity for the LIRR to participate in a full TOD development at Yaphank, where Suffolk County is now seeking to develop 250 acres of County owned land adjacent to LIRR tracks, appears to be drifting toward development that is not oriented toward rail transportation. The risk of losing this opportunity calls for a substantial effort to foster coordination between the LIRR, Suffolk County, and interested developers.

### **New York City Transit**

NYC Transit's operating environment and limited ownership of property impacts its relationship with the supporting MTAHQ departments. Transit typically works with the MTA Real Estate Department to purchase needed property rights and to market leaseholds of commercial space on NYC Transit properties. As a result of its history, Transit has very little outright ownership of real property. Transit has worked extensively with the MTA Planning Department in the course of developing major system expansions and collaborates with MTA Capital Construction in bringing these projects to fruition. Transit has also worked closely with MTA Planning as well as the NYC Department of City Planning, to encourage private developers to improve or provide access to subway facilities in concert with projects in proximity to the subways. Outside of these situations, however, interaction between MTA Planning and NYC Transit is somewhat limited.

NYC Transit's involvement with TOD is thus likely to be largely in the role of partner with New York City. NYC Transit can effectively promote TOD through this relationship in several ways. First, Transit can participate in City TOD efforts, such as the Flushing Commons mixed use development that is planned on the site of a City parking facility in downtown Flushing. Second, NYC Transit can work with the City to ensure that private developers provide access and other improvements to adjacent transit facilities through City zoning regulations. Third, NYC Transit can be a collaborator in the City's neighborhood planning process through working with City Planning to analyze the City's neighborhood growth forecasts and their transportation implications to coordinate transit improvements and large scale redevelopment as on the far west side of midtown Manhattan. Transit can support smaller scale redevelopment through transit improvements, as has been the case on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, near the Delancey Street station.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our examination of conditions within the MTA service area and TOD in areas throughout the United States, the PCAC has developed general recommendations for actions to be undertaken by the State of New York, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC), and the MTA and its operating agencies. These recommendations are designed to further the growth of Transit Oriented Development throughout New York State and the MTA region and to allow local communities and the MTA and its operating agencies to share in the benefits of TOD. Our recommendations are general in nature and do not specify the organizational structure to be created to address TOD issues or recommend specific sites, because formal TOD programs in the MTA region are only in their early stages or yet to be initiated.

### **NEW YORK STATE**

New York State must be the initial catalyst for successful Transit Oriented Development projects. The actions taken by the State, at both the executive and legislative levels, can set the stage for TOD by encouraging local agencies to more closely link land use and transportation in ways that promote a transit-friendly environment, to provide information and funding for planning and implementation, and to foster cooperation among state departments and agencies that impact local government planning and private sector development. TOD proponents often face significant delays and difficulties in securing local land use approvals for projects, even in areas where regional and local policies support such development. In addition, the State has an important role in developing and disseminating data and information about the effects and benefits of TOD in the areas of transportation, economics, and quality of life. This information is necessary in order to improve local government analysis of

proposed TOD projects and could help expedite the local land use approval processes.

New York State must directly address the issue of Smart Growth and Transit Oriented Development and capitalize on the economic gains that can be leveraged from the \$50 billion capital investment that has been made in the MTA network over the past quarter century. We recommend that the State encourage TOD by:

- Developing a state Smart Growth policy through reexamining the work and recommendations developed by the Quality Communities Interagency Task Force in its report, *State and Local Governments: Partnering for a Better New York*.
- Evaluating the Hudson River Greenway program to determine if this Smart Growth program model can be extended to other parts of the State.
- Coordinating land use and transportation planning at all levels of government and with state government agencies responsible for transportation, housing, environment, agriculture, finance, economic development, health, recreation, and aging.
- Providing technical assistance through state departments to municipalities interested in implementing TOD projects.
- Implementing rules that require NYMTC to include elements in its transportation plans to reduce reliance on private automobiles.
- Examining state environmental review requirements to determine whether they raise unnecessary barriers to TOD.
- Evaluating the feasibility of using state-owned land near major transit stations as sites for TOD.
- Using state-owned land to link highways to transit stations to encourage TODs or make stations and TODs more accessible.
- Developing a program to purchase strategic real estate holdings surrounding existing transportation infrastructure.
- Conducting an inventory and maintaining a record of properties suitable for TOD near rail lines and stations.

- Considering laws and regulations that encourage TOD, such as state legislation that allows for partial property tax exemptions to be provided for TOD.
- Developing and making available private mortgage instruments, such as the “Smart Commute” program, that offers incentives to homebuyers in TODs.
- Providing funding for local jurisdictions to prepare plans and develop laws, ordinances, and regulations to facilitate transit-oriented development.
- Providing funding for TOD demonstration projects.
- Providing liability protection for brownfield development.
- Establishing a relationship with academic institutions to provide ongoing data collection and analysis of travel patterns and the economic impacts of TODs and for the incorporation of these data into improved analysis and decision-making tools.

## **NEW YORK METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL**

NYMTC, because of its vital role in approving federal funding for transportation projects, is in a unique position to motivate local governments to consider the linkages between land use and transportation and to encourage more efficient and sustainable land use patterns. NYMTC can exercise leadership in moving the region to more sustainable development patterns through its transportation planning programs. It can also provide background data and information to assist local planning efforts that further TOD. The PCAC recommends that NYMTC facilitate TOD by:

- Establishing a linkage between transportation planning and land use as a priority in the Regional Transportation Plan.
- Providing ongoing data collection and analysis of travel patterns and the economic impacts of TODs and incorporating these data into improved analysis and decision-making tools.
- Expanding the Sustainable Development Studies program, an inclusive, community based planning process aimed at developing complementary land use patterns and transportation systems.
- Removing the LITP 2000 from NYMTC’s 2005-2030 Regional Transportation Plan and developing a new plan for Long Island that is

based on the linkages between transportation and land use and recognizes the LIRR as a vital component of any plan.

## **METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MTA)**

As the largest provider of public transportation service within its twelve-county region, the MTA is in a unique position to facilitate TOD and to provide improved linkages between transportation infrastructure and land use. Moreover, the continued health of the MTA and its operating agencies is impacted by the nature of the communities which they serve. The MTA can help to guide that form and provide for a stable future ridership by acting to make the MTA system and the region's communities complement each other. We recommend that the MTA and its operating agencies exercise a leadership role and take advantage of existing opportunities to encourage Transit Oriented Development throughout the region by:

### **MTA Headquarters**

MTA Headquarters has a particular opportunity to deal with TOD issues that transcend operating agency boundaries and set the tone for encouraging TOD in the MTA region. While the operating agencies face different environments relative to TOD and should be given the flexibility to design their own TOD programs, MTA Headquarters can establish minimum expectations for TOD within the operating agencies. The PCAC recommends that MTA Headquarters exercise a leadership role and take advantage of existing opportunities to encourage Transit Oriented Development throughout the region by:

- Obtaining FHWA funding to create a TOD program that will allow the MTA to increase its staffing that specializes in TOD at all levels of MTAHQ and the operating agencies.
- Increasing its system-wide planning for TOD, assessing opportunities at each station site, and considering at the regional level the relationship between land uses around each station and their effect on ridership systemwide.
- Establishing a set of transportation and station area circulation guidelines and creating a best practices design manual to provide municipalities with tools to develop plans and assist them in considering rezonings or redevelopment plans.
- Incorporating Transit Oriented Development in each of the operating agencies' Strategic Business Plans.
- Conducting an inventory and maintaining a record of properties suitable for TOD near rail lines and stations.

- Developing a program to purchase strategic real estate holdings surrounding existing stations.
- Requiring that operating agencies consult regularly with the MTA Real Estate, Planning, and Capital Program Management departments regarding the details of large potential projects that are under development or that they would like to develop.
- Working more actively with all operating agencies to develop integrated marketing, planning, and real estate strategies for major projects from their inception.

### **Metro-North Railroad**

Metro-North has made important strides in the area of Transit Oriented Development in its involvement with the successful planning effort at Beacon. In addition, MNR has undertaken a number of initiatives, such as the Station Net Leasing program and parking and access improvements at Poughkeepsie that have the potential to support TODs associated with these stations. Because of this experience, the PCAC's recommendations chiefly address ways for Metro-North to build upon its successes and expand opportunities for TOD throughout its system.

There is an existing institutional framework to support Smart Growth activities within Metro-North and its service area and a number of locations with potential for Transit Oriented Development. The PCAC recommends that Metro-North continue to leverage its considerable investments in the rail system, its institutional capacity, and its past successes to expand the Railroad's involvement in TOD by:

- Expanding the resources tied to the Strategic Intermodal Facilities and TOD programs. The successes in Beacon and Poughkeepsie have produced momentum and strengthened Metro-North's relationships with state and local agencies, creating the prospect of new levels of state and local coordination in the Railroad's service area. Increased capabilities would enable Metro-North to expand opportunities for coordinated planning with municipalities that are receptive to TOD.
- Capitalizing on the potential for increased station area activity created by the Station Net Leasing program by publicizing improved station services and hours of operation. For example, Metro-North could emphasize information regarding net lease tenants and the increased hours of operation on its *Stations* web page.

- Planning for both MNR property and the wider station area with the aim of fostering long-term rather than short-term value. Because MNR has a long term investment in its rail infrastructure, its time horizon in evaluating the use of its resources should be considerably longer than that of an investor who seeks to receive a return and move on within a relatively short time following the completion of a project.
- Emphasizing in the creation of station access plans the relationships between the station and adjacent land uses, as well as the benefits that can be derived through fully integrating the station into the life of the surrounding area.

### **Long Island Rail Road**

With over 170 years of history on Long Island and daily ridership of nearly 282,000, the LIRR is an important part of Long Island's transportation system. The Rail Road has profoundly influenced the settlement patterns of Long Island, and although the expansion of the Island's highway system in the last 60 years has eroded that influence somewhat, severe congestion on these roads presents an opportunity for the Rail Road to capture greater numbers of riders and once again shape the development of Long Island. To guide the development of Long Island to a pattern that is better targeted to the interests of the LIRR and the community as a whole, however, a multifaceted approach that coordinates land use with transit and other public infrastructure is needed. The LIRR has begun such an approach with the Village of Mineola.

The PCAC found that improving this coordination is one of the major challenges facing the LIRR. This is no small task, as it will require an inclusive planning process bringing state, county, and municipal governments, regional planning bodies, major non profit and private sector stakeholders, and the public at large together with the LIRR. Improved coordination would not only allow the LIRR to draw upon additional resources and to ensure that its viewpoint is included in the planning process, but also allow the LIRR to assist and empower municipalities to improve their local communities. The PCAC recommends that the LIRR support transit oriented development and strengthen its role in the planning process by:

- Strengthening the relationship between the LIRR and MTAHQ. The LIRR should make more effective use of the resources of the MTA Real Estate, Planning and Capital Program Management departments beginning with the initial phases of a project. Current issues where MTAHQ resources could be valuable to the LIRR are the process of siting a mid-Suffolk yard, planning for the development of Suffolk County owned property at Yaphank, and clarifying potential interrelationships between these two efforts.

- Establishing a TOD program that can both respond to opportunities and local planning efforts and take a leadership role in initiating projects. The program should actively promote and support the efforts of municipalities, developers, and community organizations to establish TODs.
- Planning for both LIRR property and the wider station area with the aim of fostering long-term rather than short-term value. Because the LIRR has a long term investment in its rail infrastructure, its time horizon in evaluating the use of its resources should be considerably longer than that of an investor who seeks to receive a return and move on within a relatively short time following the completion of a project.
- Implementing a net leasing program for station facilities. By leasing stations to private operators, the LIRR can retain space for its essential services and customer waiting areas, but be freed of the responsibility of maintaining the station facility. Leasing to an operator, such as a restaurant or café, also has the advantages of expanding the hours that station facilities are open and increasing the activity level in the station area.
- Adopting a comprehensive approach to improving station access, including expanding connecting services, undertaking parking and pedestrian improvements, and improving vehicular and pedestrian routes and signage near stations. A basic initiative that could be valuable in supporting station area development is the installation of wayfinding signage directing motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians from major transportation routes to LIRR stations.

## **New York City Transit**

Although NYC Transit is likely to have a limited role in the initiation of TOD projects, Transit's involvement with the development process is crucial in maintaining the efficient movement of residents, workers, and visitors throughout the City and in creating and maintaining walkable neighborhoods. While there may be some individual projects where NYC Transit can be an active partner in the redevelopment of areas near subway stations, its more typical role will be as a collaborator in the City's neighborhood planning process.

This collaboration can take several forms, from coordinating major transit improvements with the redevelopment of large areas, to supporting more limited redevelopment taking place in the neighborhoods through improving transit infrastructure, to directing development to areas where capacity exists to serve new residents and workers. By becoming a partner in the planning process, NYC Transit can encourage development patterns that will not only improve the City environment, but also solidify its ridership base and make the most efficient



use of its resources. We recommend that NYC Transit work to further TOD in the City by:

- Creating a Smart Growth group within NYC Transit that is responsible for coordinating transit needs and land use issues.
- Fostering a working relationship with the Department of City Planning to ensure that serious consideration of public transportation plans, resources, and capacities is included in reviewing any large scale development project undertaken within the five boroughs.
- Working with New York City officials to ensure that adequate access to public transit is available and related transit amenities are included in plans for development or redevelopment projects throughout the City.
- Focusing on directing development to areas where capacity exists to serve new residents and workers. In working with the City, NYC Transit can emphasize areas where system capacity is available or make adjustments to system operations to free capacity to serve growing neighborhoods. By becoming a partner in the planning process, NYC Transit can try to encourage development patterns that will not only improve the City environment, but also solidify its ridership base and make the most efficient use of its resources.

## INTRODUCTION

Public transportation ridership in the United States has increased significantly in the last several years reversing a half century pattern of decline. While much of the recent ridership increase is attributed to higher fuel costs and the rising cost of commuting by private automobile, transit ridership has also benefited from demographic changes. Increases in immigration and the aging of the population, as well as a renewed interest in more compact settlement patterns have all contributed to the gain in public transit use. This report looks closely at the coordination that has been established between land use practices and transportation facilities in the MTA region.

National ridership trends have been mirrored in some parts of the New York region. In 2005, ridership on the New York City Transit system was 2.2 billion, the highest since 1970; subway ridership was the highest since 1953. These gains were in spite of a fare increase early in the year and a three day transit strike in December. Metro-North Railroad's East of Hudson ridership grew 3.7 percent to its highest level ever. Metro-North also continues to build upon its recent ridership growth by adding service to meet demand in expanding markets. NJ TRANSIT experienced the greatest 2005 ridership gains in the region with a 5 percent increase. Long Island Rail Road's ridership has lagged behind the trend. Its 1 percent total ridership increase in 2005 was the first since 9/11/01, and East of Jamaica weekday peak ridership remains below its 1996 level.

The key to making transit use a primary option for mobility is to ensure that trips on transit are convenient, pleasant, and efficient. For example, if riding the train involves a slow and frustrating drive to a massive surface parking lot, followed by a five minute walk to the platform, an average rider will not be enthusiastic about using the train, regardless of the quality of service provided. A well designed Transit Oriented Development (TOD) program can complement a well run transit system. Research data show that the localities that have implemented TOD land use practices have experienced impressive ridership gains. Such coordination allows transit providers to go beyond examining the quality of passengers' experiences while in their systems and lets them examine other factors that can affect customers' satisfaction and willingness to use the transit system.

A Transit Oriented Development is a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development pattern that is within walking distance of a transit station and contains or adjoins a core commercial area. TODs are usually built to leverage the development opportunities available in station areas and to support transit infrastructure.

Transit Oriented Development is one of a variety of development strategies that are generally referred to as Smart Growth. While there is not universal agreement about the boundaries of the term Smart Growth, in general Smart Growth involves the creation of a spatially compact mix of uses and residential

styles with a strong sense of place and an emphasis on the conservation of natural, cultural, and land resources.

In creating new urban forms, one focus of Smart Growth is mixing land uses and creating transit and pedestrian friendly environments.<sup>1</sup> It should be noted, however, that not all Smart Growth includes Transit Oriented Development. Some Smart Growth plans do not utilize public transportation as a primary factor in shaping the development of the community.

The MTA region is particularly suited to Transit Oriented Development because of its vast transportation infrastructure. In September 2004 Reconnecting America, a prominent national TOD advocacy organization, noted that the New York metropolitan area is expected to create more demand for additional housing within one half mile of a transit station than any other metropolitan area. Much of New York City functions very successfully as a natural TOD. Subway stations are often hubs of activity, and patterns similar to transit villages have developed in many neighborhoods. The best of these city areas exemplify the dense, mixed use, walkable character that TODs seek to achieve through careful planning.

The MTA and its operating agencies could further their interests by substantially increasing their support for Transit Oriented Development. TOD opportunities can generate revenue from developers that use MTA properties and create a stable base of new ridership for the railroads. Some of this new ridership may be added outside of peak hours or in the reverse peak direction due to the mixture of uses typical in TODs.

Early in the development of this report the PCAC decided not to identify specific properties as potential TOD sites because of the tremendous amount of advance work that must be performed in order to properly identify a promising site. This process is beyond the scope of our study and PCAC staff resources. We believe that this work is properly performed by the operating agencies and the MTA and that the MTA and its agencies should pursue funding from the FHWA and other appropriate funding sources to secure adequate staffing to address these issues.

In this report, PCAC focuses on the movement toward and potential for Transit Oriented Development primarily within the Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad networks. Many of the land use patterns around New York City Transit's subway stations are already essentially TODs. Also NYC Transit controls very little real property that could be used for TOD. This report focuses on the railroads and discusses broadly steps that NYC Transit can take to support TOD.

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<sup>1</sup> Talking Smart in the United States, Gerrit Knaap, Professor and Director of Research, National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education Urban Studies and Planning, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742.  
[http://www.smartgrowth.umd.edu/research/pdf/Knaap\\_TalkingSmart\\_DateNA.pdf](http://www.smartgrowth.umd.edu/research/pdf/Knaap_TalkingSmart_DateNA.pdf)

First, we review the concept of TOD in general, including its benefits to transit agencies and riders and the obstacles to its implementation. The report examines the current status of TOD activities within New York State, the NYMTC region and at the MTA and its operating agencies. We discuss the many challenges that remain in creating an atmosphere conducive to TOD in the MTA region. These challenges include a balkanized system of land use controls and the very limited incentives that exist in New York State for increasing density and using existing infrastructure.

We then review some of the state TOD policies and TOD programs created by transit agencies around the country that have been most successful in shaping the areas around their stations to make them more appealing places to start and end the day, as well as destinations in themselves. In New Jersey, where there is a strong statewide TOD program, the projects undertaken by developers have begun a movement from almost exclusively automobile oriented designs that further suburban sprawl to a mixture of projects that include higher density mixed uses and promote their proximity to transit.

Based on these experiences from around the country, we put forth recommendations for New York State, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC), the MTA and its operating agencies on methods to encourage TOD.

## BENEFITS OF TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

New York City and its surrounding suburban communities present some of the best examples of Transit Oriented Development available. The more densely populated portions of New York City function as the most successful TODs in the nation. As a result of the migration from the cities in the 1950's and 1960's, many individuals decided that the automobile was destined to be the nation's primary means of transportation. Residents shifted from communities oriented around transit infrastructure to areas with lower densities and extensive road networks. The resulting development pattern has proven to be essentially unsustainable, resulting in increased pollution, increased expense, traffic congestion and wasted time. Rediscovering the traditional neighborhood structure that still prevails in much of New York City and in some surrounding towns served by the commuter railroads and extending it to other locations within the MTA service area will yield a wide range of benefits and help to mitigate unsustainable development patterns.

Transit Oriented Development has a number of benefits for both transit operators and their customers. From the standpoint of the transit provider, the immediate benefit of participating in a TOD is often financial. When transit agencies control real property that can be developed as part of a TOD, they generally receive cash or in-kind compensation in exchange for the use or ownership of these property interests. For example a transit agency that owns large surface parking lots near a train station can convey rights to use or ownership of these lots to a TOD developer. The developer may in return agree to maintain an equivalent number or increase parking spaces for commuters in shared parking structures, incorporate necessary capital expenditures, such as station access improvements, or provide cash compensation for an ownership or other interest in the underlying land.

It is important, however, for transit agencies to recognize that the initial financial compensation available from a TOD project is a relatively small portion of the long term value of the project to the agency. These transactions are more than one-time sales of real property; they represent the beginning of a relationship where the transit agency has a substantial stake in the success of the development. The payment negotiated in the short run for the sale of property interests is generally small in comparison to the total investment that has been made in the transit system. Most of the value of a TOD project to a transit agency may lie in increasing the efficiency of utilization of the system, rather than in sale proceeds.

By some estimates, Transit Oriented Development increases the use of transit at nearby stations from 20 to 40 percent. For already established railroads in developed areas increases are more likely to be in the single digits, still

representing thousands of riders.<sup>2</sup> In addition, because TOD results in trip origins and destinations near transit stations, the demand for parking per passenger is lower than is the case of traditional development. With the per space cost of creating parking approaching and exceeding \$10,000 to \$15,000 for surface and \$25,000 to \$35,000 for structure parking even in suburban areas, the benefits of increasing ridership without increasing parking demand must be considered in a calculation of costs and benefits.

A benefit of TOD closely related to increased ridership is the development of new travel markets. In the New York region, the pattern of public transportation ridership appears to be changing. Even as total ridership grows, peak period ridership in the primary direction of travel has grown less dramatically or even, as is the case of the Long Island Rail Road's East of Jamaica peak ridership, noticeably declined. Emerging growth areas appear to be reverse peak travel and trips between intermediate stations, evening and night travel, and weekend trips. Because TODs are often designed to function as desired destinations as well as trip nodes, they tend to attract trips, helping to diversify a transit provider's ridership structure away from the traditional commuting model, which has limited potential for growth.

A Transit Oriented Development may even result in some direct longer term financial benefits for the transit agency. If the agency continues to hold an interest in properties near a successful TOD, the value of those properties is likely to increase, benefiting the transit agency. For example, a transit agency may maintain control of in-station retail space after an adjoining TOD is completed and occupied. The incremental traffic at the station resulting from the TOD creates additional value for the transit agency, which may be captured either through existing arrangements with merchants or at the expiration of existing lease agreements.

Analyzing these long term benefits raises some additional issues. A long term perspective on the benefits of TOD demands a decision making rule that is more complex than a simple "sale to the highest bidder" approach. The value of benefits expected in the future must be evaluated in combination with near term compensation, and not all benefits are readily expressed in the same terms. For example, serving additional riders often costs transit agencies, but providing transportation is the mission of these agencies. Reconciling this accounting of benefits may be difficult; however, it is necessary for a fair evaluation of the merits of a TOD project.

Transit Oriented Developments also create a number of benefits for public transportation users. Perhaps most significantly, implementing a TOD creates

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<sup>2</sup> *Statewide Transit-Oriented Development Study: Factors for Success in California*. California Department of Transportation, 2002. The final report noted study consultant Parsons Brinckerhoff's finding that implementing TOD can yield an increase of 20 to 40 percent at an individual transit station.

new choices for the residents of an area, particularly those who prefer a less automobile-dependent lifestyle. These individuals may include elderly persons, those who wish to drive less, and persons with disabilities. For most prospective TOD residents, however, choice of residence is not motivated by limitations in using private vehicles but by other factors, such as the desire to avoid traffic congestion and save time in commuting. The walkable nature of TODs, which results from higher densities and conscious design decisions, not only allows residents to save time that would ordinarily be spent driving from place to place, but is also attractive to some individuals because of their desire to live in a more compact town setting and to have a lifestyle that is not overly dependent upon automobile use.

In addition to expanding choice, the nature of Transit Oriented Developments results in financial benefits for their residents. Research on TODs consistently notes that households in TODs have lower transportation expenses than residents of more conventional auto-oriented neighborhoods. These reduced transportation costs free funds to be spent on other priorities, such as housing. Not having to provide for extensive automobile use can reduce the operating cost associated with a TOD, or at least compensate for operating costs associated with building at higher densities. The cost savings available to TOD residents are recognized in Fannie Mae's Smart Commute program, which gives prospective home buyers the opportunity to qualify for a larger mortgage with the help of anticipated savings from using public transportation.

When automobile use is reduced, the level of supporting infrastructure that must be provided, and which is generally funded by residents and users of the development project, is likewise reduced. For example, housing in TODs generally produces less demand for parking spaces than conventional residential development, and some TODs have made these savings explicit by uncoupling the costs of housing and parking. While in a traditional development the purchase or rental of a residence may include title to or the right to use a given number of parking spaces, some TODs price residential space and parking separately. Residents pay the full cost of the parking and realize savings when they reduce their need for parking. Arrangements such as this are important for the future of TODs because they make clear the cost advantages of transit oriented design.

## OBSTACLES TO TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

The obstacles that TOD projects face generally can be categorized as financial, organizational, or political. Some of the financial obstacles are straightforward; development of TODs is expensive, and factors such as higher densities or structured parking can make it even more so. This may be offset to some degree, however, by the greater total return that can be derived from projects at higher densities. In the denser communities that have histories of industrial or commercial usage, sites available for TOD may have costly environmental issues that are not present in the development of virgin land. Financing for complex mixed use projects is often difficult to secure. Together with these higher costs and financing uncertainty, the market for TODs in many areas is unproven, increasing the risk perceived by potential developers.

Organizational obstacles include the lack of staff capacity within a transit agency to deal with TOD issues, poor coordination between transit agencies and local governments, overlapping and contradictory regulation that makes development difficult, and the failure to create an explicit policy and set of policy goals for the promotion of Transit Oriented Development.

Political obstacles to TOD include a lack of local political support, inflexible land use controls and parking requirements, and citizen opposition. Often citizen opposition to TOD may be traced to a fear that development will mean additional congestion. In fact residents of TODs tend to own fewer cars and take fewer trips than those in developments characterized by suburban sprawl.

It is clear that these divisions are somewhat artificial when applied to specific situations. Financing for projects may not be forthcoming because investors and lenders fear political opposition to a project, and citizen opposition may make local governments reluctant to establish working relationships with transit agencies. In addition, financial, organizational, and political factors can interact to frustrate TOD efforts. For example, a state may lack the planning program infrastructure necessary to foster the growth of TOD at the local level, and this deficiency may be compounded by a political climate hostile to state level planning. Similarly, costs can reinforce existing political opposition to projects, but political will and support grounded in a commitment to perceived long term benefits can move TOD projects forward even in the face of short run costs that are higher than those for conventional development.



## FINDINGS

The PCAC examined New York State policies regarding Smart Growth and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) to better understand the current level of support for TOD from the State and the ways in which the State has leveraged more than \$50 billion that has been invested in the MTA system since 1982. We then reviewed the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council's (NYMTC) efforts to establish a linkage between transportation planning and land use. With an understanding of the climate in which the MTA operates, we then explored the extent to which each of the operating agencies (LIRR, MNR and NYC Transit) coordinates with MTA Headquarters and makes use of MTA planning, real estate, and funding resources in order to achieve TOD goals. Finally, we looked at how each of the operating agencies pursues TOD and fosters TOD in its service area.

### **NEW YORK STATE**

While New York State offers a number of diverse incentives to encourage Smart Growth, it does not have the capacity to measure the performance of their recipients, nor does it coordinate state policies or spending to further Smart Growth objectives. Inter-agency coordination and performance evaluation are essential elements of a quality growth strategy that are lacking in New York State. The State has not directly addressed the issue of Transit Oriented Development and thus has failed to capitalize upon the potential economic gains that could be leveraged from the enormous capital investment made in the MTA network over the past quarter century.

New Jersey, Washington DC, Oregon, and California have all created agencies and policies to foster Smart Growth and TOD through a coordinated multi-departmental approach. As a result, a number of TOD projects have been successfully developed in these areas, with more people seeking to live in TODs and more developers interested in investing in TODs than ever before.

New York State has not been as effective as these other jurisdictions. Although a series of planning reforms were adopted in the 1990s, which included changes that updated the laws authorizing local comprehensive planning, more recent efforts to enact several Smart Growth proposals have not been successful. With this limited level of success in the legislative arena, the primary effort to make planning more effective has been conducted through administrative action by the Governor and New York State executive departments.

In 2000, Governor Pataki established the Quality Communities Interagency Task Force (QCITF), which was chaired by Lieutenant Governor Mary O. Donohue. The Task Force was directed to study the issues that affect the creation of community visions. The Task Force found that New York's vision of a "Quality Community" means revitalizing downtowns and community centers, promoting

agriculture and protecting farmland, conserving open space and environmental resources, enhancing transportation choices and creating more livable neighborhoods, encouraging sustainable development, strengthening intergovernmental partnerships, and helping to create, implement, and sustain the vision of a Quality Community.

In January, 2001, the Task Force released its findings and recommendations in a report entitled *State and Local Governments Partnering for a Better New York*. The report made forty-one detailed recommendations to the Governor. Of the forty-one recommendations made by the Task Force, the Governor's Office responded to only one; it provided a \$95,000 grant to the Department of State for the Quality Communities Clearinghouse website, which can be found at [www.qualitycommunities.org](http://www.qualitycommunities.org). The website provides brief descriptions of services and links to twenty-five state agency web pages that offer programs that support efforts to establish "Quality Communities." This site is helpful in locating state funding opportunities for New York local governments that want to accomplish Smart Growth objectives.

In 1997 the New York State Department of Transportation began working with a team of consultants led by Parsons Brinkerhoff to examine ways to improve mobility on Long Island. The plan, called the Long Island Transportation Plan to Manage Congestion (LITP 2000) was completed in 2001. The Plan is largely dependent upon private vehicles and a sketchy bus rapid transit system. At the time of the plan's announcement numerous transportation advocates opposed it for its many flaws. In 2002, the Regional Plan Association in its report *Four Transit Issues on Long Island* stated that "The LITP 2000 is not the answer for improving transportation on Long Island." The Plan called for the expansion of 60 miles of limited access highways in Nassau and Suffolk Counties to accommodate an additional lane in each direction and the expansion of another 130 miles of arterial roads. The added lanes on the highways would be used by carpools of two or more persons and public transit vehicles called rapid commute vehicles.

Among the many problems with the plan is that it does not make a link between land use planning and transportation or require that this linkage be reflected in recommended actions. While no information has been released regarding the study since 2002, NYSDOT has not yet conceded that the plan will create more mobility problems than it will solve. Instead, it continues to offer LITP 2000 as an investment option for improving Long Island's mobility problems in the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council's 2005-2030 Regional Transportation Plan, which is discussed in the following section of this report.

The State has acted in one area related to Smart Growth that is proving to be beneficial to a small group of municipalities. In 1991, the New York State Legislature approved Smart Growth legislation that designated the Hudson River Valley as a special district known as the Hudson River Greenway. The district

was created to facilitate the development of a voluntary regional strategy for preserving scenic, natural, historic, cultural, and recreational resources in the Hudson River Valley region. It was also established to encourage state, county, and local governments to support development projects that use existing buildings, promote higher densities and mixed land uses, and utilize or build upon existing infrastructure whenever possible. The Greenway provides Smart Growth incentives to towns within its designated area. These incentives include making available technical and funding assistance to communities for updating comprehensive plans or zoning ordinances, establishing preferences in the scoring of applications for state grants, streamlining environmental review processes, and providing liability protection for actions taken to carry out the goals of the regional Greenway Plan.

In June 2004, Westchester County created the Westchester County Greenway Compact Plan, which establishes the basis for participating municipalities to qualify for incentives provided through the Hudson River Valley Greenway Act. The plan lists a number of policies that can be implemented by participating local municipalities. One of its goals is to direct development to centers where infrastructure can support growth and where public transportation can be provided efficiently. The fourteen municipalities participating in the Westchester County Greenway Compact Plan include the Village of Tarrytown, Village of Croton-on-Hudson, Town of Ossining, Town of Cortlandt, City of Peekskill, Village of Buchanan, and Village of Briarcliff Manor. Each of these municipalities has taken action to become a Compact Community as defined in the state legislation.

Metro-North Railroad runs through seven of the fourteen counties that comprise the Hudson River Valley Greenway and New York City's Borough of The Bronx is also designated as part of the Greenway. There are no state designated Smart Growth areas on Long Island.

## **NEW YORK METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL (NYMTC)**

The New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) is the federally authorized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for New York City, Long Island and the lower Hudson River Valley area. It is a regional council of governments whose voting members include the Counties of Nassau, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk, and Westchester. In addition the MTA, New York City Department of Planning (NYCDCP), New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) and the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) serve as voting members.

NYMTC provides a forum for interagency cooperation and public input into transportation planning and is mandated by the federal government to determine how federal transportation funds will be spent in the New York MPO region.

NYMTC also sponsors and conducts studies, assists county planning agencies, and monitors compliance with national air quality standards. It is required to produce a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which articulates the region's transportation needs and desires over a minimum of a twenty-year period.

PCAC reviewed the current 2005-2030 RTP to examine the ways in which NYMTC links transportation planning to land use. The RTP does not identify linking transportation planning with land use as a priority in the plan document, but merely incorporates it as a subset of its primary planning principle to "harmonize the system with its surroundings." The RTP does address the linkage between transportation and land use through its Sustainable Development Studies.<sup>3</sup> NYMTC defines these as plans for developments that will not outpace the transportation system's ability to serve communities in safe and environmentally friendly ways. While NYMTC partnered with local governments and funded four pilot corridor-level Sustainable Development Studies, the 2005-2030 plan does not show its other partner agencies following suit in linking land use and transportation. None of the transportation projects supported by NYMTC and undertaken by NYSDOT, NYC, the regional counties, the MTA or its affiliated agencies demonstrate how they will be linked to land use planning. NYMTC's document *Transportation Improvement Projects for 2005-2010* also does not explain how the transportation projects will be linked to land use planning efforts.

As mentioned earlier in this report, the Mobility section of NYMTC's 2005-2030 Regional Transportation Plan continues to identify New York State DOT's Long Island Transportation Plan to Manage Congestion (LITP 2000) as an option for relieving congestion. With the LITP having been roundly rejected three years before the publication date of the NYMTC plan document, a tremendous void remains in workable solutions for addressing traffic congestion on Long Island. Nonetheless, the Gateway section of the regional transportation plan report continues to describe LITP 2000 as an active investment proposal.<sup>4</sup>

The Sustainable Development Studies that NYMTC has sponsored are a valuable starting point, but developing a policy to link transportation planning with

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<sup>3</sup> There are two sustainable development studies in the lower Hudson Valley – Route 303 and Route 202/35/6 Bear Mountain Parkway; one in Brooklyn in the Coney Island/Gravesend area; and one on Long Island, which involves the five Eastern Long Island towns of East Hampton, Riverhead, Shelter Island, Southampton and Southold. These sustainable development studies include only a limited role for other agencies in the region, including NYSDOT and the MTA. The studies have raised a number of issues, including promotion of mixed-use development; working with local communities to update their master plans to include accommodations for transit and transit-oriented development; promotion of walkable communities; improvement of pedestrian and bicycle access; waterfront redevelopment; and zoning. The Plan identifies a number of sustainable development and community emphasis areas across the region where new studies of this type could be beneficial.

<sup>4</sup> A discussion of the LITP report may be found on the internet at <http://www.rpa.org/pdf/litreport.pdf>

land use more generally can assist in addressing many of the other priorities that the Council seeks to accomplish. Fortunately, NYMTC has embarked upon a new effort to develop a regional vision for the New York metropolitan region to form the basis for future transportation planning. Initially, the Council has developed a set of shared goals for the region; drawing upon these goals the Council will identify a set of growth areas within the region. Most importantly, these goals and growth areas can provide a firm foundation for targeting new transportation investment throughout the NYMTC area. These new developments are a good beginning.

## **METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MTA)**

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority Headquarters (MTAHQ) provides support to its affiliated agencies and subsidiaries. Outside of MTAHQ, the MTA affiliated agencies and subsidiaries are generally organized functionally, with individual operating agencies responsible for providing a specific set of services. For example, the Long Island Rail Road operates commuter rail service between Long Island and New York City and MTA Bridges and Tunnels operates the Authority's bridge and tunnel facilities.

In this report the PCAC focuses on the TOD related activities of the Long Island Rail Road, Metro-North Railroad, and New York City Transit, as well as the elements of MTAHQ that could be most useful in supporting TOD efforts. The most relevant areas of MTAHQ support for TOD lie in its Real Estate and Planning departments, and the Grant Management office of the Capital Program Management department. These departments respond to requests for support from the agencies. The degree to which these MTA departments interact with each operating agency is frequently determined by the President and staff of the operating agency.

The MTA Planning Department works with the operating agencies on planning processes leading to the development of the Authority's five year Capital Programs. MTA Planning has scheduled a monthly collaboration known as the Long Range Planning Framework meeting, which brings together representatives throughout the MTA family to allow participants to stay informed about current and upcoming projects and to communicate the needs of these projects in advance. We were unable to determine from our contacts with the MTA how often the group actually met in 2005 and 2006, but it appears that meetings are infrequent. From the information that we have received, it appears unlikely that this meeting fosters close collaboration on projects that may require detailed discussions between multiple interested parties.

The MTA Real Estate Department recognizes the importance of TOD, and many of its staff members support and have a detailed understanding of TOD concepts. The Department's staffing limitations, however, restrict its ability to pursue TOD goals. The Real Estate Department's staffing has remained steady

for the past twenty years, yet in the last five years the MTA and its agencies have undertaken two mega projects, East Side Access and Second Avenue Subway, which are the largest transportation projects in the country. The MTA is also in the process of negotiating the two largest current real estate projects in New York City, the Atlantic Terminal project and West Side Yards. The Fulton Street Transit Center and other large projects also place demands upon the department's time and attention. In addition, the Real Estate Department is charged with caring for a diverse inventory of MTA assets, which includes train stations, transit hubs, intermodal connection points, rights-of-way, easements, yards, maintenance facilities, air rights, leased properties, and other real property in which the MTA holds an interest.

Despite these other responsibilities the Real Estate Department explores a number of TOD opportunities in the properties for which is responsible. The MTA also works through the Department to acquire land adjacent to MTA owned properties when the opportunity arises. The Real Estate Department is currently conducting a survey to better identify the full extent of MTA's ownership of real property, and when this survey is complete it will be better able to evaluate TOD opportunities throughout the system.

MTA Real Estate works with Metro-North and NYC Transit to evaluate additional development opportunities at stations and has stated that it will begin working with the LIRR to evaluate TOD opportunities at the Rail Road's stations. While the Real Estate Department has made efforts with the LIRR in the past, the success of these initiatives is dependent upon the willingness of the LIRR to act on opportunities that the Department presents. Active communication between the LIRR and the MTA is also necessary to keep the larger organization fully informed as new opportunities present themselves. In this new undertaking, the Real Estate Department will be analyzing factors such as station configuration, functionality, amenity improvements, parking, vehicular traffic, complementary use, and the like to determine whether TOD would be viable at a station in conjunction with locally planned initiatives. MTA Real Estate will also be working with the LIRR on identifying leasing opportunities at its stations.

MTA Grants Management could further assist the effort to promote TOD by vigorously pursuing available Transit Oriented Development funding. The FHWA's Transportation, Community and System Preservation Program (TCSP) funding has been available since 1999. While the MTA has not applied for the funding in the past, they have said they would be interested in future funding opportunities. The FHWA Website describes the program on their website at: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tcsp/index.html>.

At the MTA operating agencies we found Metro-North Railroad (MNR) to be proactive in its approach to MTAHQ on development issues. The Railroad maintains regular contact with relevant MTAHQ departments with regard to project development ideas, problem solving, and funding resources. The results

of this collaborative relationship can be seen in the successful MNR Smart Growth Strategic Intermodal Facilities and TOD projects that are discussed later in this section. Metro-North believes that bringing MTA Headquarters into a project at its inception insures that levels of expertise available at the MTA inform the process from the beginning. As the Railroad identifies locations that have favorable indicators for a TOD project, station development options, and beneficial income strategies, the Real Estate Department is able to further clarify property issues pertaining to their locations. This collaborative relationship between Metro-North and the MTA has resulted in advancing the most TOD projects and Smart Growth Strategic Intermodal Facility initiatives within the MTA family.

The Long Island Rail Road is not as proactive in its dealings with MTAHQ and appears to take a more narrow approach to their relationship. MTA Planning is not as closely involved with developing a strategy for LIRR capital projects until the environmental impact study stage of a project. The LIRR prefers to develop plans with the assistance of the MTA's Legal Department to ensure that any legal requirements are fulfilled. Once plan development is well underway using in-house resources and consultants, the LIRR then begins to work more actively with MTA Planning. LIRR engages the MTA Real Estate Department in the course of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) process to address issues related to the acquisition of real property.

NYC Transit's operating environment and limited ownership of property impacts its relationship with the supporting MTAHQ departments. Transit typically works with the MTA Real Estate Department to purchase needed property rights and to market leaseholds of commercial space on NYC Transit properties. Transit has worked extensively with the MTA Planning Department in the course of developing major system expansions, such as the Second Avenue Subway, and collaborates with MTA Capital Construction in bringing these projects to fruition. Transit has also worked closely with MTA Planning as well as the NYC Department of City Planning to encourage private developers to improve or provide access to subway facilities in concert with projects in proximity to the subways. Outside of these situations, however, interaction between MTA Planning and NYC Transit is somewhat limited.

## **THE OPERATING AGENCIES**

Just as municipalities need to develop new master plans to encourage Smart Growth and Transit Oriented Development, transit agencies must also develop new plans and initiatives that promote TOD. Transit agencies such as the LIRR, MNR, and NYC Transit must have an understanding of the best TOD practices in order to identify opportunities when they present themselves.

Often transit agencies promote and initiate TOD incrementally with relatively modest steps, such as a program to improve access to a station. This program

might include posting additional wayfinding signage to improve pedestrian or vehicular access. It might also include expanding the transportation modes that can be used to reach the station by bringing in new connecting services, such as ferries, buses, and shuttle services. Alternatively, the first stage of a TOD could focus on improvements to the station facilities as a means of improving the public perception of the station. The station can be made more attractive and convenient for customers and new businesses, and activities can be incorporated into the station to make it a destination rather than merely a connecting point.

The role that the operating agencies can play in promoting TOD may depend on who initiates the planning process. In some cases, the impetus for TOD comes from a local government, a developer or a combination of local government and a private entity. The push for TOD can be generated from collaboration between the transit agency and a developer, a local government or an interested third party. In some cases, the transit agency has initiated planning for TOD. While a successful TOD requires a good deal of involvement on the part of the transit agency, the transit agency's role will likely fall in a range between being the initiator, leader and facilitator at one extreme and supporting the TOD efforts through operational and facility improvements at the other.

The activities that the operating agencies may undertake to support TOD also vary according to the nature of the community. They have the ability to provide planning, real property, and assistance in obtaining federal and state funding for communities wanting to establish a TOD.

The PCAC found that in the inner ring of suburbs, where density around a railroad station is relatively high, improvements to the station and its immediate surrounding area are often effective as a first step to promote and facilitate Transit Oriented Development. By improving bicycle and pedestrian access to the stations and increasing activity at and near the stations, transit agencies can motivate local governments to update their master plans and land use controls in order to accommodate adaptive reuse of existing buildings in the area and promote infill construction where structures no longer exist or are suitable for demolition.

In the middle and outer ring suburbs, where densities are lower, providing station and station area amenities may also spur TOD. In these communities, however, there is often greater opportunity for transit agencies to work with counties and municipalities to develop comprehensive plans that take full advantage of existing transit infrastructure. In less dense communities, lower land values may present greater opportunities to purchase property in order to assemble a significant site for a TOD project.

In the territories served by the Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad, there are opportunities for both the incremental "inner ring" approach, as well as the more comprehensive "middle and outer ring" approach. As NYC Transit



stations are generally located in areas that already feature mature development patterns, facilitating Transit Oriented Development in New York City requires a somewhat different approach, which is discussed in the NYC Transit section of this report.

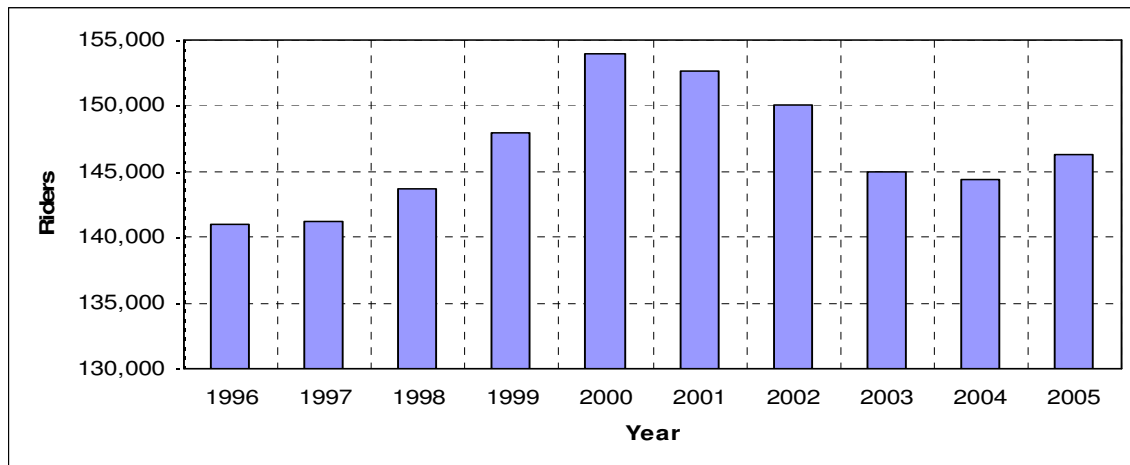
## **Metro-North Railroad**

Transit Oriented Development in Westchester County can be said to have begun in 1851 when a group of skilled tradesmen affiliated with "Mechanics Mutual Protection No. 11" in New York City purchased five farms totaling 369 acres, and subdivided them according to a grid plan. The leader of the group, John Stevens, saw the endeavor as a means of improving the condition of New York's working class by freeing them from rent payments and enabling them to enter the property owning class. They incorporated the Village of Mount Vernon in 1852, and it grew rapidly into a city over the next 40 years. Mount Vernon is located between New Rochelle and Yonkers and, like the other two municipalities, borders the Bronx on its south. Unlike Yonkers or New Rochelle, which were established as communities in the 17th Century, Mount Vernon was developed for a new community of people who were economically dependent on New York City and were regular commuters to the City.

The coming of the railroads to Westchester brought a shift in population from the northern part of the County to the south. Before the railroads, the most populous town in Westchester County was Bedford. Between 1845 and 1855, the population of the County increased by 33,000, with most of the additional residents choosing to live in the towns close to the railroad lines. By 1860 the total population of the County was 99,000, and Yonkers was its largest city.

When Metro-North Railroad was created in 1983, the rail facilities that had fueled this early growth had deteriorated considerably. After a great deal of hard work and a series of successful capital investment programs the Railroad has repaired and significantly upgraded its infrastructure and is once again an attractive transportation option for area residents. It has also implemented a number of programs to increase its ridership and attract residents away from their cars and onto the Railroad. These initiatives include improving service delivery, running targeted advertising campaigns in high growth-potential markets, conducting sales outreach to major employers, implementing new train service, upgrading station access including new connecting services, expanding and improving parking facilities, and developing special events to promote the system and travel to particular destinations. The result of the Railroad's efforts is that in 2005 Metro-North achieved the highest ridership in its history and an increase in its East of Hudson commutation ridership of 2.9 percent, reflecting a turnaround from the declines experienced after September 11, 2001.

### Metro North Total Peak Ridership 1996-2005



- (1) Includes AM Reverse Peak ridership and West of Hudson ridership on the Port Jervis and Pascack Valley Lines.
- (2) Based on passenger counts to/from GCT and Harlem-125th Street. Totals include customers traveling between Bronx Stations and Manhattan which cannot accurately be split out as annual count data for the Bronx Stations is not available. Approximately 3% of peak riders travel between the Bronx and Manhattan

In the other northern counties that Metro-North serves, land prices are relatively less expensive resulting in suburban sprawl. For Metro-North Railroad the Smart Growth oriented Strategic Intermodal Facilities program and Transit Oriented Development initiatives represent major planning tools that help meet Railroad growth goals while alleviating the stresses that outlying towns are experiencing. As local leaders look for solutions to control sprawl and its accompanying traffic congestion, the opportunity exists for Metro-North to participate in and often spearhead the planning process by providing knowledgeable planners to assist these communities in planning for the interaction between the town and the Railroad. Metro-North has capitalized on a number of these opportunities.

### **METRO-NORTH RAILROAD'S PARTICIPATION IN TOD PROJECTS AND SMART GROWTH STRATEGIC INTERMODAL FACILITIES**

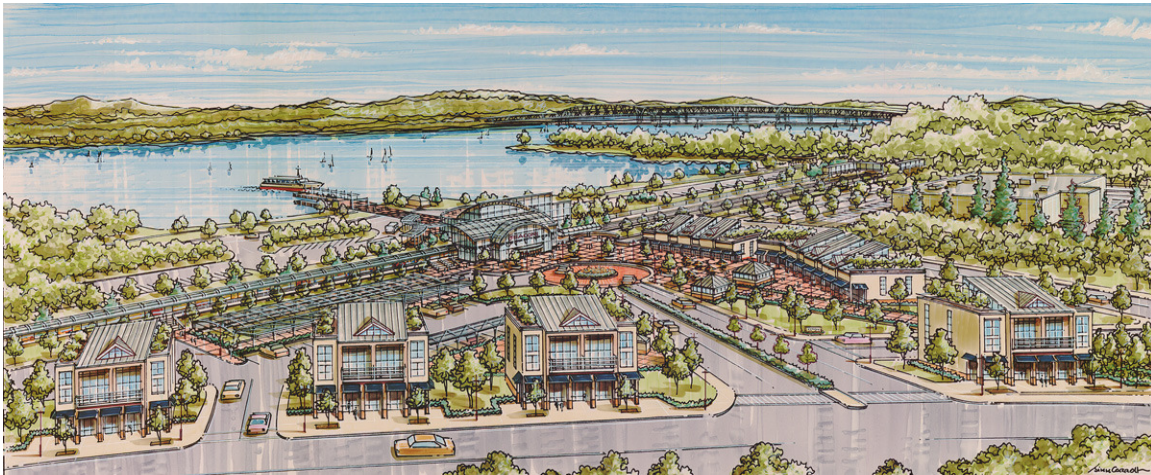
Metro-North's participation in Smart Growth Strategic Intermodal Facility and TOD projects has occurred in a variety of ways. The Railroad initiated or participated in joint efforts, partnering with developers, municipalities and other third parties. The Railroad has also partnered in developer initiated station and parking and TOD oriented projects. In the Cities of Poughkeepsie and Beacon, MNR facilitated strategic planning processes to develop a long-term plan for the station area. Smart Growth and Transit Oriented Development projects in which Metro-North has been actively involved are discussed below.

#### *The Beacon Station Area Master Plan*

In early 2000 Metro North identified Beacon as a candidate for its Strategic Intermodal Facilities Program. The program strategy includes identification of existing or new station opportunities to establish major transportation hubs in Metro North territory. The goal of the program is to enhance station facilities,

improve access, and expand commuter parking to address the need for thousands of parking spaces throughout Metro-North territory.

### **A Shared Vision for Beacon**



Metro-North believes that investments made through the Program will sustain and promote increased rail ridership and revenue as well as meet current and projected customer demands for parking and station access. The station and parking investments that are made are coordinated with local governments and often serve as a tool to promote economic development.

By virtue of soaring ridership and connection to two counties via the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge, not to mention unmet parking needs, there was an opportunity at Beacon for a major initiative by the Railroad. Metro-North was interested in solving access problems at Beacon and reducing its parking permit waiting list of 700, which persisted despite two previous lot expansions in the 1990's. New York State was also interested in reducing congestion on the Newburgh – Beacon Bridge. Metro-North became the leader in resolving these issues. The effort began with addressing both transportation and local needs and engaging the City, County, and State, as well as local stakeholders, in a new process the Railroad conceived and launched. The effort resulted in the Beacon Station Master Plan for Smart Growth. Specifically, Metro-North convened a Core Stakeholder Group, which was comprised of more than 20 participants representing the City of Beacon and a mix of local and state organizations and government agencies. The plan was also refined through a number of public outreach meetings including a design charette and visioning sessions conducted by Metro-North.

The collaborative planning process required balancing the Railroad's goals of improving station access and parking with Beacon's desire to support the City's revitalization and to enhance connections among downtown Beacon, station area attractions, and the Hudson River. It also meant incorporating many diverse and creative ideas into a unified Smart Growth station area plan meeting the needs of the community and project stakeholders. Together the Railroad and local

stakeholders stated a desire to create a sense of arrival by building a “Gateway to Beacon,” to consolidate the surface parking into a parking structure, to mitigate traffic impacts, to reclaim the waterfront and link it to downtown Beacon, and to continue local participation in the planning and development process.

The process resulted in a plan that envisions building a multifunctional public gateway station with a connected garden-top garage that will enable the town to reclaim the waterfront area now used for surface parking. An intermodal plaza will support bus, taxi, van, green hybrid vehicle, bicycle, and carpool access and provide ADA accessible parking and a ferry connection to Newburgh. Since the project requires significant funding to advance, one implementation strategy calls for land that Metro-North acquired to be programmed for a Transit Oriented Development at the station. This element of the plan may serve as the catalyst that advances the project’s construction, in whole or in part.

During the process an interim project was spun off from the master plan to address immediate term needs for improved access. This project consists of a new intermodal area, 365 new parking spaces, and the launch of a ferry service to Newburgh to mitigate station parking demand and reduce traffic. The interim project was completed in September 2006, and the Railroad subsequently eliminated the station’s parking permit waiting list.

One of the more significant lessons learned in the Beacon experience is the usefulness of visioning processes for building community consensus in favor of TOD. Visioning involves bringing together a broad range of community members in an interactive process to develop a shared picture of the community’s future. The process draws upon history, present conditions, trends, and values to create a consensus view of the future that the community should pursue. While this process required more time than other options, it built a real sense of partnership between the Railroad and the local community, and is considered to have increased the likelihood that the project will be implemented in a timely fashion.

### *The Poughkeepsie Station and Structured Parking Project*

In Poughkeepsie, Metro-North began to expand its planning role and moved beyond the construction of surface parking lots. By the early 1990’s the waiting list to get a space at the Poughkeepsie station parking lot had grown to several hundred. Metro-North recognized that this terminal station for its Hudson Line had substantial potential to draw passengers from the northern and western part of its service area, but that the lack of parking posed a huge constraint to ridership growth.

At the same time, the City wanted to make better use of the Poughkeepsie MNR station because of its strategic location on the Hudson River waterfront. Metro-North worked with the City and recognized that Poughkeepsie could help to achieve many of its long-term goals for the proposed waterfront redevelopment

by participating in a project for a new parking structure. The development of the 540 space Poughkeepsie garage spurred successful TOD around the perimeter of the station including retail and residential uses, enhancing the waterfront economy.



Initially MNR was lacking 75 percent of the funds needed for the project, having five million dollars and needing another fifteen million. The Governor and several state agencies, elected officials, and other interested parties worked together to provide the additional funding. The station parking structure was opened in 2001.



The Poughkeepsie Station is an impressive building with a graceful steel walkway that protects pedestrians from the elements during their walk from the station to the street. In the early 1990's the station was in need of a complete restoration and the covered walkway had become unusable. Metro-North, collaborating with the City and State, identified and secured the needed funding to restore portions of the station as well as the entire walkway and

created a new intermodal plaza. They also based the design of the parking structure on the historic station architecture, and included in the garage a pavilion area that frames the Hudson River. The project successfully restored much of the access to the Hudson River. Currently Metro-North Railroad is considering adding the Poughkeepsie station and parking pavilion to its Net Leasing Program because its attractive views of the Hudson River and newly renovated station area make the property very desirable for a commercial tenant. The uniqueness of the parking structure alone brought five awards to Metro North.

### Other MNR TOD Projects

Metro-North is also involved in a joint development planning effort with the Town and Village of Harrison. The Town and Village are interested in developing Railroad land adjacent to the existing station, which consists of a Metro-North owned parking lot and additional vacant land. Metro-North is working in partnership with the Town and Village to develop this site. The potential benefits of this Smart Growth project to MNR are an increase in available parking by consolidating surface parking into a compact structure at minimal cost by leveraging its residual real estate assets at the station.

In Ossining, Metro-North has been involved in the proposed mixed-use Harbor Square development of new residential and commercial construction adjacent to Metro-North's Ossining Station and the development of an embarkation point for railroad sponsored ferry service to Haverstraw. The joint plan includes the developer providing additional parking at the train station for Metro-North customers in exchange for shared use of existing Railroad parking by visitors to the development during weekends and evenings when spaces are underutilized.

Metro-North also has been broadening the contexts in which it works with real estate developers. In Sleepy Hollow, a developer has been interested in building a massive mixed use project on a former industrial site on the Hudson River and executing the project as a TOD. Metro-North is participating in a joint study to assess the possibility of adding a station that would serve both the corridor and the development. At this time Metro-North is reviewing the potential ridership and parking benefits of locating the station, which would be built at the project site at the expense of the developer.

As can be seen from these projects as well as others currently being planned at Harlem-Valley Wingdale and Greystone, Metro-North has begun to expand its role beyond the immediate station and parking area and has found additional opportunities as a consequence of the agency's experience in leading a successful TOD planning effort at Beacon. Metro-North's relationships with state and local agencies have been strengthened through these collaborations, raising the prospect of a new level of state and local coordination in the Railroad's service area. In fact, the Connecticut Department of Transportation is concurrently engaged in a number of TOD's on the portion of Metro North's New Haven Line that is in the State of Connecticut.

The success of these efforts continues to motivate Metro-North to identify similar opportunities and seek out those municipalities that are open to creative solutions to limit sprawl, control traffic and reduce the burden of unchecked development in their communities. It is through these collaborative processes that the greatest results can be achieved for New York State, the towns, the Railroad and the riders.

## **PROJECTS CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT**

MNR is also active in other initiatives to create a transit friendly environment and improve conditions for Transit Oriented Development. As the station environment improves near by land values also tend to rise and the desirability of the area for new development also increases.

### *Improving the Station Environment – The Station Net Leasing Program*

In 1999 Metro-North wanted to improve the environment of its stations. The Railroad collaborated with MTA Real Estate to create the Station Net Leasing Program for a pre-selected group of stations. The idea behind the Station Net Leasing Program was to place a lead retail tenant in the station, who would then be responsible for the day to day operations of the station, relieving MNR of this burden and providing improved station conditions for customers. Generally, the net lease tenants, mostly restaurants or cafes, have expanded hours of operation allowing the station to remain open for a longer period, providing and maintaining public areas in the station and even providing space for ticket selling facilities for the Railroad. Where the tenant is a good fit with the station, net leasing is beneficial to the tenants, the riders and the Railroad.

The environment at these stations has substantially improved and they are becoming destinations as well as places of departure. Customer satisfaction surveys reflect the improvements that have been made. Overall station ratings increased at the net leased stations after the rehabilitation and leasing effort. These stations have also become income producers for the Railroad rather than an operating expense. The net leasing program has resulted in \$1.2 million in investments made in the stations by the lessees. These investments include environmental remediation and added amenities including improvements to the restrooms, lighting, air-conditioning and waiting room. The program has also resulted in annual operating cost savings, cost avoidance and increased revenue for the Railroad. Station hours at the participating stations have increased by 200 percent.

As of April 2006, the MTA Real Estate department had leased six stations through the Net Leasing Program, and stations in Port Chester, Mamaroneck, Yonkers, Hastings, and Crestwood are currently being marketed. A lease arrangement for the Pearl River station was approved by the MTA Board in July 2006. Table 2 below illustrates the expanded station hours and types of businesses that operate in station facilities under this program. Typically, without a net lease arrangement, Metro-North owned station facilities are open from 6:10 am to 1:30 pm weekdays and they are frequently closed on weekends.

**Table 2. MTA / MNR Net Lease Station Program: Leased Stations**

Station	Tenant	Type of Use	Station Building Hours
Peekskill	Kelley's Restaurant	Newsstand/Bar / Restaurant	5:45 AM – 11:00 PM closed weekends
Hartsdale	Starbucks Coffee	Coffee Shop	5:30 AM – 9:00 PM 7:30 AM – 9:00 PM (Sat) 7:30 AM – 7:00 PM (Sun)
Mt. Kisco	Flying Pig	Restaurant / Caterer	5:30 AM – 3:00 PM (M,T) 5:30 AM – 9:00 PM (W,Th,F) 9:00 AM – 9:00 PM (Sat) Closed Sunday
Brewster	Suz Express, Inc.	Coffee Shop/Food Take-Out	5:00 AM – 2:00 PM (M-F) 7:00 AM – 2:00 PM (Sat)
Spring Valley	Papa John's Pizza	Pizza Restaurant / Coffee Stand	5:30 AM – 10:00 PM Seven Days/Week
Pelham	Steam Café & Houlihan Lawrence Real Estate Brokers	Coffee Shop and Real Estate Agent	6:00 AM – 2:00 PM (M-F) (Hours may be extended in the future to include weekends)

*Improving Connectivity within the Parking Area and Beyond:*

Metro-North has worked to improve connectivity within the station area to insure safe circulation of vehicles and pedestrians in the parking area. The Railroad has sought to develop parking projects that integrate multimodal station access including pedestrian, bicycle, kiss and ride areas, and bus stops whenever possible. To date, eleven stations have been retrofitted with these improvements. Although these improvements are geared primarily for passengers who arrive by automobile, they can also benefit pedestrians.

*Improving Wayfinding Signage*

Prior to the creation of Metro-North Railroad, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) had provided some roads with signs indicating that a train station is in the vicinity. In the late 1990's Metro-North recognized a need to create greater station awareness and provide better routing for passengers to find their way to the Metro-North stations. MNR redefined and expanded the highway signage program with NYSDOT support. Signs now include the MTA and Metro-North logo as well as the name of the station. MNR also put signage on both major highways and local access roads to guide passengers to the closest nearby railroad station.





Metro-North has also launched a new program to improve connectivity within the parking area and the surrounding areas. A comprehensive pedestrian wayfinding effort has just been completed at the Beacon station where MNR created the unique image for the station, designed the signs, and funded and implemented the program.



## Long Island Rail Road

The Long Island Rail Road is the oldest commuter railroad in the country and boasts 124 stations on 11 branches that run through two Long Island counties and three New York City boroughs. In many cases, the development of the railroad and the areas it runs through proceeded in concert with each other. As a result, many of the mature communities along the LIRR right-of-way are historic Transit Oriented Developments. Forest Hills, Kew Gardens, and Bellerose Village, as well as several other close-in settlements, were planned developments purposely located adjacent to the railroad for quick and easy access to New York City.

By 1966 when the State of New York took ownership of the LIRR, the financial difficulties facing the Pennsylvania Railroad, the LIRR's previous owner, had taken their toll on the system's condition. After an initial effort to replace existing rolling stock, the LIRR has steadily worked to update and upgrade the Rail Road. With projects such as East Side Access and the Main Line Corridor Improvement project, the LIRR will be able to move forward with major system expansion.

Unlike Metro-North Railroad, Long Island Rail Road does not operate in a New York State designated district like the Hudson River Greenway that encourages a targeted approach to Smart Growth. Yet Long Island does have a number of organizations encouraging Smart Growth and access to a variety of state funding sources to support Smart Growth activities. However, because the State does not have a clearly defined, coordinated, and targeted approach to encouraging Smart Growth and Transit Oriented Development on Long Island, implementing a Smart Growth strategy is a complex labyrinth for municipalities to negotiate. In spite of these barriers, some municipalities are determined in their efforts to seek innovative answers to the problems of sprawl, traffic and the rapidly rising cost of living.

As was outlined earlier in this report, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council's (NYMTC) 2005-2030 Regional Transportation Plan identifies LITP 2000 as the solution to Long Island's severe traffic congestion problems. Unfortunately, the LITP 2000 is substantially flawed and fails to acknowledge the importance of land use and transportation planning. To date, the solutions in LITP 2000 have not been implemented, and no other comprehensive recommendations for improving transportation in Nassau and Suffolk Counties have been seriously considered or developed.

In an effort to take a more holistic approach to transportation planning, NYMTC has undertaken several Sustainable Development Pilot Studies within its planning area. One of these studies is the Sustainable East End Development Strategies (SEEDS) study in Suffolk County. The SEEDS initiative began in 2001 and involved five towns and nine villages on Long Island's East End. The collaborative group includes the LIRR, NYMTC, NYSDOT, Suffolk County, and the affected local municipalities. The effort included two distinct levels of community visioning: sessions to identify local transportation and quality of life issues, and workshops for the public to voice aspirations for what the area should look like in twenty years. When the SEEDS initiative concluded in December 2005, East End elected officials and their planning departments released a consensus concept plan. The plan calls for linking land use to transportation, creating a system of intermodal transit hubs, and expanding rail service. The East End municipalities are now developing an inter-municipal agreement to coordinate local land use planning, and transportation agencies are planning next steps for the study's transportation improvements. The LIRR has stated that the Rail Road will continue to be active in the SEEDS process.

Promoting Smart Growth as a viable development strategy on Long Island has fallen to a number of non-profit organizations. The Regional Plan Association (RPA) has written extensively on transportation issues and solutions on Long Island. They also conduct the *Mayors' Institute on Community Design*, which promotes better planning and development in communities throughout the tri-

state region. They recently held their first *Mayors Institute on Long Island*, where the topic was designing tomorrow's future.

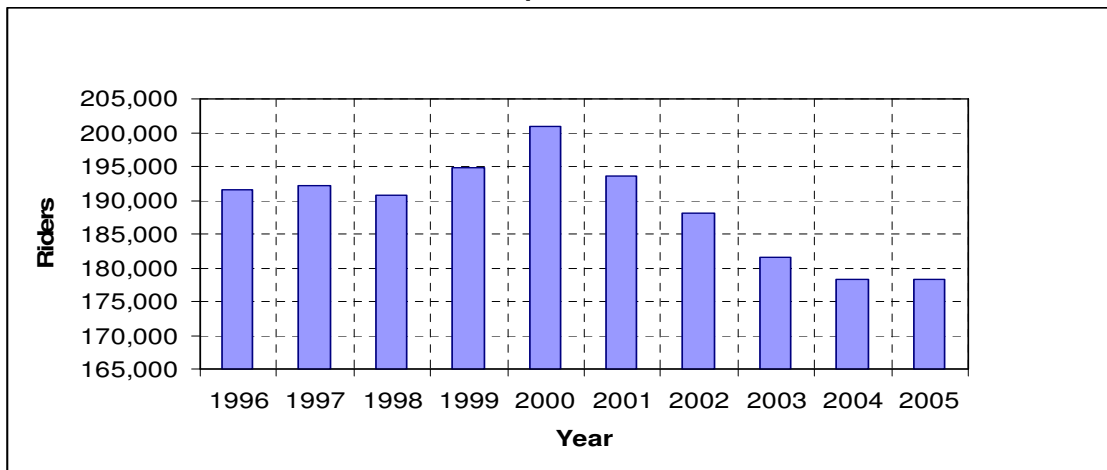
*Vision Long Island* provides municipalities with education, training, policy development, community visioning, and charette planning, design and technical assistance in order to promote Smart Growth. *Vision Long Island* convenes Long Island leaders to educate, update, and encourage their participation in Smart Growth initiatives and recognizes the work of regional leaders on Long Island through its annual Smart Growth Awards ceremony.

Another organization involved in promoting Smart Growth is *Sustainable Long Island*, which identifies brownfields on Long Island and assists developers in bringing these properties, which are frequently in close proximity to the Rail Road, back into productive use. Its website contains an extensive brownfields map and provides information on the status of individual brownfields. *Sustainable Long Island* recently held a conference entitled "Getting the Deal Done: A Conference on Making New York State Brownfields Law Work for You on Long Island." In addition, smaller Smart Growth organizations and larger national organizations with Long Island chapters are working to inform, educate, and develop the needed local policies to institute smart growth as a way of life on Long Island.

### **LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD'S PARTICIPATION IN TOD PROJECTS**

Currently, the LIRR's, East of Jamaica peak period ridership is considerably lower than it was in 1996; some of this decline can be attributed to 9/11. At the same time congestion on Long Island continues to increase. This substantial decline in peak hour riders in the face of increasing travel demand points to a need to explore solutions beyond the tracks and parking lots. Despite these trends, the LIRR has not been broadly involved in promoting TOD on Long Island.

**LIRR Total East of Jamaica Peak Ridership 1996-2005**



While the Rail Road does not have a formal program to actively promote or support TOD efforts by municipalities, developers, and other organizations, the LIRR did actively participate in the Village of Mineola's effort to revitalize their downtown and assisted with the transportation component of the Village's new Master Plan. This process began when the LIRR received a \$25 million grant from the Federal Transit Administration to further Transit Oriented Development projects on Long Island. After discussing this funding with communities on Long Island, the Rail Road chose to use the grant for planning activities in Mineola. These funds assisted in the development of the *Mineola Area Revitalization Study*, which addressed the downtown area. As this study forms the basis of the downtown element of the Village's Master Plan, Mineola officials credit the Rail Road as the main force behind the transportation element of the Master Plan.

### *Improving the Station Environment:*

The LIRR has renovated 59 of its 124 stations since 1998. It has not developed a net leasing program for station properties. On a larger scale, the LIRR partnered with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to create the Jamaica Intermodal Center, which has dramatically improved conditions at the main transfer point on the Rail Road. In the early 1990's, the Rail Road entered into a letter of intent with a private developer that was aimed at constructing a public-private mixed-use development incorporating the Ronkonkoma station. Unfortunately, this vision did not come to pass, and development at Ronkonkoma has been limited to a small number of commercial uses.



### *Improving Connectivity within the Parking Area and Beyond:*

LIRR has worked to improve connectivity within the station area to insure safe circulation of vehicles and pedestrians in the parking area. Again, while these improvements are geared primarily for passengers arriving by automobile, they also benefit pedestrians who want to access the station. The LIRR has made substantial parking improvements at 35 stations since 2000.

### Improving Wayfinding Signage

The LIRR has sought to improve wayfinding signage in stations and immediately adjacent areas as a part of its capital program. Particular attention has been paid to providing directions for riders making intermodal transit connections to buses, subways, and the Airtrain system. The Rail Road has also sought to improve wayfinding signage independent of the capital program at facilities including Penn Station, Ronkonkoma, and the Shea Stadium station.

Once one leaves the immediate station area, however, wayfinding signage is spotty or nonexistent. While some signage exists, particularly on Long Island's East End that might help motorists, cyclists or pedestrians using major travel routes to locate LIRR stations, the LIRR currently has no formal program that places signage on highways and access routes to direct people to LIRR stations. According to LIRR officials, such a program was considered in the past and not implemented, but will be investigated again in the next several months. In 2000, the LIRR East End Transportation Study recommended that trailblazer signage be placed on roads near LIRR stations through the combined efforts of NYSDOT, Suffolk County, and local municipalities.

### The Mineola Intermodal Center

The Mineola Intermodal Center parking garage contains four parking levels to accommodate 955 cars and 7 Bays for MTA Long Island Bus vehicles, as well as separate offices for Garage Management, Long Island Bus, and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Police. The garage is designed to complement the proposed Mineola Downtown Revitalization Plan and its immediate surroundings. The garage facade is composed of brick and pre-cast concrete elements, along with decorative pre-cast concrete pilasters with tile inserts that are designed to match a nearby historic bridge. An enclosed pedestrian bridge has been constructed to provide connections between the garage, Mineola Station platforms, and ground level. The entire garage and overpass are ADA compliant and provide the area with improved handicapped access. The Intermodal Center allows commuters to comfortably and safely transfer between cars, trains, buses, and nearby taxis. The Village of Mineola credits the LIRR with producing the Transportation section of its Master Plan, which is very detailed and complete.

### Other LIRR TOD Projects

The best current opportunity for the LIRR to participate in a full TOD development is in Yaphank, where Suffolk County is now seeking to develop 250 acres of County owned land. The LIRR runs directly through the northern section of this property. At the present time the LIRR is also interested in establishing a Mid-Suffolk rail yard, which would lead to the electrification of the rail line east from Ronkonkoma to the new yard. This project would greatly enhance the transportation options not only in the immediate area, but also in much of eastern

Long Island and could produce many benefits for Suffolk County. To date, the LIRR has not made use of the MTA Real Estate Department to explore conditions in the area and the development options that may be available with regard to this project.

Meanwhile, Suffolk County recently hosted a public viewing of preliminary conceptual designs for the Yaphank property from firms that have expressed interest in developing the property. None of the designs presented discussed the potential for locating an LIRR yard facility on or near the County property. As a result of not including the potential rail yard in the planning process, the developers did not take into account the possibility of service improvements that would be possible with electrification of the rail line and did not substantially orient their projects toward transit facilities. It was clear that the planning work displayed at the public viewing was generally based on the assumption that the current limited train service provided to the Yaphank area would be maintained into the future.

LIRR officials have submitted to the County a list of requirements for a potential mid-Suffolk rail yard site, but the LIRR has not presented a detailed proposal to Suffolk County that demonstrates the many benefits to the region that could be achieved by locating a rail yard, electrifying the rail line, and developing the County owned site as a true mixed use Transit Oriented Development.

The LIRR's participation in the Mineola Intermodal Center is a good starting point for developing an agency policy regarding TOD. The Village of Mineola's Master Plan offers a number of excellent recommendations for creating a more transit friendly environment. While the LIRR's work at Mineola is to be commended, more needs to be done. The Rail Road's lack of active involvement with a number of other development projects is cause for concern. As Long Island continues to develop, the Rail Road should be a leader and involved participant at the table, proposing ideas and solutions rather than reacting to decisions already made.

## **New York City Transit**

The core of the New York City Transit system is its 27 line, 660 mile subway system. Within this system, there are 468 stations; some of these stations are combined in multi-station complexes, and as a result these stations account for 424 nodes within the subway system.<sup>5</sup> While the number of passengers using each station varies considerably, subway stations are generally important locations in a community. Higher intensity uses, such as large office buildings and major retailers, are attracted by the convenience and greater pedestrian traffic near stations. Proximity to the station is also an important factor in the desirability of residential units.

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<sup>5</sup> Station counts include the Cortlandt Street station on the Broadway/7<sup>th</sup> Avenue line, which has been closed since September 11, 2001.

The subway system has been an attractor and generator of development since its opening in 1904. The subway has long been cited as one of the major factors in the expansion of dense settlement beyond lower Manhattan and western Brooklyn. The expansion of the system led to the rapid development of formerly rural areas of upper Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens. Some of the communities that grew up along the subway were carefully planned to capitalize on access to transportation and were essentially early TODs, but in many cases the concentration of uses around the subway stations was more organic, as shops, offices, and higher density residential uses clustered near each neighborhood's station. Due to the continuing importance of the system to the City, these patterns have largely persisted until the present day.

Because of the historical development of the New York City Transit system, its relationship to the property where it operates is unique. From 1904 to 1953, the subway system was owned by the City of New York. With the creation of the New York City Transit Authority in 1953, the City retained ownership of the transit properties and the Transit Authority was now charged with operating the system. With the creation of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority in 1968, the Transit Authority was placed under the control of the MTA.

As a result of this history, NYC Transit retains the right to operate the subway system, but in fact has very little outright ownership of real property. While in other cities local transit agencies own not only station properties, but often surrounding real estate such as parking facilities, this is not the case with NYC Transit. Therefore NYC Transit's ability to pursue joint development projects is constrained.<sup>5</sup> NYC Transit's ability to shape the development of areas adjacent to its stations is largely dependent on its relationships with the New York City Department of City Planning and the developers of privately owned real estate that is above or adjoining existing and planned stations.

Further defining NYC Transit's role in TOD is the existence of a vital planning process located within the City government. While local planning capacity varies greatly in areas served by the MTA's commuter railroads, in New York City the Department of City Planning is engaged in an active process of reviewing existing land uses, assessing development needs and opportunities, and creating and implementing redevelopment plans. In addition, other City agencies, such as the NYC Economic Development Corporation, are actively encouraging the redevelopment of City property in transit friendly designs. The planned Flushing Commons mixed use development, to be constructed on the site of a City parking facility in downtown Flushing near Long Island Rail Road and NYC Transit subway stations, is a result of these efforts.

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<sup>5</sup> Joint development is a term used to refer to the situation where a transit agency owns land that a private company develops for transit oriented uses.

One example of this continuing process is City Planning's current efforts in the Pelham Gardens area of the Bronx. While much of the work taking place is an effort to maintain the existing community character, there is also an element of the neighborhood plan that seeks to provide for increased densities in the community core. Similar efforts have been pursued in other areas of the city and are currently underway as the evolution of New York City continues. It is not necessary for NYC Transit to initiate the planning process or to provide technical planning assistance as is the case in other communities because of this activity,

## **PROJECTS CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT**

Although NYC Transit has a limited role in the initiation of TOD projects, Transit's involvement with the development process is crucial to maintaining the efficient movement of residents, workers, and visitors throughout the City and to creating and maintaining walkable neighborhoods. One means of capitalizing upon private development to create improvements in the subway system is to use the City's zoning powers to require or entice private developers to improve adjoining subway stations as an element of their proposed project. To be effective, however, such an effort requires a close working relationship between NYC Transit, MTA departments and subsidiaries such as Planning, Real Estate and Capital Construction, and the NYC Department of City Planning.

In a number of areas, zoning overlay districts have been created that establish standards for incorporating transit facilities in new development and provide for adjustments to maximum floor areas for developers who provide significant transit facilities. Two early examples of creating benefits for transit using zoning bonuses were the improvement and expansion of the Union Square subway station complex in conjunction with the redevelopment of the S. Klein department store site in the mid 1980's and the creation of a concourse connecting stations serving the 53<sup>rd</sup> Street and Lexington Avenue subway lines in the late 1980's as part of the 599 Lexington Avenue office tower project. Zoning bonus programs, while substantially curtailed over the years, have also been used to provide station access improvements in a number of locations.

More recently, NYC Transit has primarily been a partner in planning for station areas beyond the project level, serving as a collaborator in the City's neighborhood planning process. NYC Transit is currently working with City Planning in analyzing the City's neighborhood growth forecasts to better understand the City's future transportation needs at the neighborhood level. Another outstanding example of this collaborative process can be seen in planning for the redevelopment of the far west side of midtown Manhattan. While the extension of the 7 subway line is an extraordinary example of coordinating transit improvements and redevelopment, Transit can also support redevelopment taking place in the neighborhoods through improvements to the subway system at a smaller scale. One such convergence of neighborhood renewal and transit improvements can be seen on the Lower East Side of



Manhattan, where extensive renovations to the Delancey Street subway station have changed the everyday experience for area subway riders.

## OTHER STATE AND TRANSIT AGENCY POLICIES

In order to fully understand the benefits and opportunities of TOD, it is helpful to look at how other states and transit agencies around the country have incorporated TOD into their planning efforts. While there are issues that are unique to TOD in the New York metropolitan region, the experience of other states and transit agencies is a valuable source of effective practices and lessons learned for TOD in the MTA region.

Many states and multi-state agencies throughout the country have passed multi-agency policies that encourage and support smart growth and Transit Oriented Development. The areas in the forefront of this effort include New Jersey, Oregon, California, and the Washington DC metropolitan region.

### **The State of New Jersey**

The State of New Jersey has one of the most developed and comprehensive Smart Growth programs in the country and is a leader in implementing transit-friendly land use policies. The New Jersey State Planning Act was enacted in 1986 and created the State Planning Commission with a mandate to prepare and implement a framework for New Jersey's growth and preservation. The Commission found that coordinated state action was necessary to control suburban sprawl and to accomplish this task established the Office of State Planning (OSP). The OSP developed a plan to coordinate and streamline State policies related to development. The OSP also decided that to encourage a regional approach to land use planning, financial incentives would need to be provided to New Jersey's municipalities.

In 2002, the State Planning Commission made significant changes to the State Planning Rules and reorganized the Office of State Planning into the Office of Smart Growth (OSG) to place a greater emphasis on implementation. This office has become the mechanism to ensure inter-agency coordination and state policy development. The State Plan has been a vital tool in promoting visioning, setting local goals and objectives, and advancing an understanding of the benefits of concentrating growth in areas that are already developed.

That same year, Acting Governor Codey signed an Executive Order directing all state agencies to incorporate Smart Growth principles in their programs, policies, and activities. The Commission and OSG have since developed a Plan Endorsement process to encourage local planning that is consistent with the State Plan and Smart Growth principles.

## NJ TRANSIT

NJ TRANSIT has taken a very proactive approach to issues of land use around its rail stations. Beginning in 1994, NJ TRANSIT developed the document *Planning for Transit-Friendly Land Use: A Handbook for New Jersey Communities*. The *Handbook* assists local government planning officials and other stakeholders with fostering the relationship between land use planning and transit. The *Handbook* is an important tool for understanding the process of creating and implementing transit-friendly land use plans around stations, along major transit corridors, and in proposed new areas of development.

Taking local and regional TOD education to the next level, NJ TRANSIT, in concert with Rutgers University's Voorhees Transportation Center, has developed an electronic *Transit-Friendly Development* newsletter. The purpose to this publication is to keep municipal officials, planners, and advocates informed about transit-oriented strategies, activities, and development opportunities in New Jersey, the region, and throughout the nation.

In 1999, NJ TRANSIT, utilizing a grant from the Federal Highway Administration's *Transportation and Community and System Preservation* (TCSP) program, developed the Transit-Friendly Communities (TFC) Pilot Program, a three-year TOD planning assistance program involving eleven diverse communities along commuter rail and light rail corridors throughout the state.<sup>6</sup> The undertaking was successful enough to convince NJ TRANSIT's Board of Directors to expand the availability of local transit friendly planning assistance to all interested municipalities with transit facilities around the state. To date, forty communities have collaborated with NJ TRANSIT to create plans for TOD around rail stations.

Also in 1999, NJ TRANSIT and the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) created the Transit Village Initiative to encourage transit-friendly land use practices and mixed-use development within a one quarter to one half-mile radius around rail, bus, light rail or ferry passenger facilities. NJ DOT, in concert with an eleven-member state agency Transit Village Task Force, determines whether a municipality will be designated a Transit Village. Designation occurs only after the municipality has completed much of the required visioning, planning and background work and is poised for redevelopment to begin.

The Transit Village initiative brings together key state agencies such as the New Jersey Department of Transportation, NJ TRANSIT, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Office of Smart Growth, the Commerce and Economic Growth Commission, Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency, Main Street New Jersey, New Jersey Economic

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<sup>6</sup> NJ TRANSIT TFC Pilot Program consultant team included: Regional Plan Association, Project for Public Spaces, New Jersey Future, Downtown New Jersey and the Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University

Development Authority, New Jersey Redevelopment Authority, and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts in support of local efforts to "grow smart" and reinforce the principles of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. Since the program's inception, seventeen municipalities have been designated New Jersey Transit Villages.<sup>7</sup>

NJDOT has been able to measure the performance of the Transit Villages by establishing its own partnership with the Voorhees Transportation Center. The partnership allows the Voorhees Center to collect data important for evaluating the performance of the towns and agencies involved in the Transit Village program in order to better identify the impacts and results of the program.

The Voorhees Center's work is important in establishing a set of best practices in TOD and in carefully documenting TOD's impacts. For example, while it is widely feared that the residential component of TODs will be home to large numbers of school age children, thereby overburdening local public school systems, research conducted by Voorhees is discovering that the population of school age children in TODs is generally very small. While many people experienced with TODs recognized this, the research being produced by Voorhees is valuable in documenting the impact of TOD for state and local government decision makers and the public at large.

NJ TRANSIT actively participates in Fannie Mae's Smart Commute Initiative. The national program gives prospective homebuyers preferential terms for qualifying for a mortgage that takes into account the savings that can be realized as a result of living near and using public transportation. The Smart Commute Initiative addresses the link between housing affordability and transportation costs and recognizes that homeowners who spend less on commuting expenses have more funds available for the purchase of a home. If home buyers choose to purchase a home within one half mile of a rail or light rail station or within one quarter mile of a bus stop, participating lenders will add a portion of their potential transportation savings to the income that will be considered in qualifying the buyers for a mortgage. This adjustment increases their home buying power and allows them to buy homes of greater value than they could otherwise purchase. Borrowers under the Smart Commute Initiative also receive up to two free NJ TRANSIT one-month passes per household.

Finally, NJ Transit actively pursues TOD on its own properties, primarily surface parking lots, along key rail corridors. Close collaboration with the host community and interested stakeholders is key to the success of these public/private projects.

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<sup>7</sup> Designated NJ Transit Villages include Belmar, Bloomfield, Bound Brook, Collingswood, Cranford, Jersey City (Journal Square), Matawan, Metuchen, Morristown, New Brunswick, Netcong, Pleasantville, Rahway, Riverside, Rutherford, South Amboy and South Orange.

## **Oregon: Portland**

The State of Oregon has long been a leader in the field of Smart Growth. Proceeding out of a commitment to preserving rural areas, the State has responded by channeling most growth within Urban Growth Boundaries and creating the planning tools to enhance the livability of the areas within those boundaries. This state policy serves as a framework for the Portland metropolitan area's commitment to comprehensive growth management. METRO, the regional government for the Portland area, plays an important role in making growth management policy and coordinating local government action to further that policy.

Also, within the state policy framework the local public transportation operator TriMet, the Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District of Oregon, has invested funds not only in creating station infrastructure, but in producing station area plans, designed to complement planned transit investments. These plans subsequently were made legally binding by local governments.

Oregon's commitment to Smart Growth was firmly established by the enactment of statewide planning legislation in 1973. The statewide planning system that evolved required cities and counties to participate in the planning process by developing comprehensive plans for local areas that are consistent with statewide goals.

The State has also implemented rules to require its Metropolitan Planning Organizations to include elements to reduce reliance on private automobiles in transportation plans. In the Portland area, a metropolitan service district evolved by 1992 into a full fledged elected metropolitan government that has real power to coordinate land use and transportation planning. While there have been periodic challenges to the system of planning that has evolved over the years, public support for coordinated growth management planning has remained strong and its position has strengthened as both the institutional and physical environments evolve over time. This planning framework has been invaluable in supporting TOD in the Portland region.

Portland's commitment to TOD has grown over the last three decades as its transit system has expanded. While some TOD projects in Portland, including the seminal downtown transit mall development that opened in 1978, were built around existing transit routes, a great deal of the Transit Oriented Development that has been completed was planned in conjunction with new rail lines. Portland's initial Eastside light rail line was designed in the mid 1970's without taking TOD into consideration, but the alignment and station locations of the Westside light rail were designed specifically to accommodate future TOD. The Portland Streetcar was put into service in the early 1990s as a means of attracting residential development in the central area of the city.

Tri-Met used TOD to finance the Airport light rail extension. Bechtel Enterprises contributed over 20 percent of the extension funding in exchange for the opportunity to develop a 120 acre TOD at the entrance to the airport. Going beyond encouraging TOD through rail system design, the Portland Metro government and the Portland Development Commission also use federal transportation funding to implement their TOD programs. This funding pays for site acquisition and control, and the design and construction of transit amenities within TODs. State legislation also allows for partial property tax exemptions to be provided for TODs, although not all communities in the Portland area have chosen to make use of these incentives.

More than finding a niche for TOD within the real estate market, Portland's commitment to TOD has in a real sense changed the market. Downtown Portland's Pearl District continues to be very much in demand, and a critical mass of TOD has been created that reassures developers and lenders that new projects can be financially viable. The primary market for TOD in Portland remains very similar to the national profile of TOD residents, childless professional singles and couples as well as retirees, but the case has been made that widespread TOD is part of the quality of life benefits that draw these people to settle in Portland.

The success of TOD in Portland has provided substantial benefits for the community and has been a major element in the growth of the area's economy. Since TriMet began building its light rail system, the private sector has invested more than \$3 billion in real estate and economic development projects within walking distance of rail stations. While in most areas finding an active TOD at a rail station would be a pleasant surprise, the attention paid to TOD opportunities in rail line planning make it rare to find a station without TOD activity in the TriMet system. The communities around rail stations are vibrant and popular places, and the metropolitan area as a whole has grown even while air pollution has diminished and the road system gridlock that plagues other expanding urban areas has failed to materialize.

The Portland experience shows what can happen when land use planning and transit system development work together. It is true that the tremendous success of TOD in Portland has resulted from a statewide and regional commitment to changing the nature of development, but this experience provides many lessons to be learned. It is evident from Portland that there is a market for well planned TODs and that TOD can mitigate many of the impacts of growth. The Portland experience also illustrates the importance of designing transit facilities with their relationship to potential development in mind. While there is limited potential for system expansion in the New York region, there are still opportunities to design system improvements to accommodate TOD. Finally, Portland shows that successful TOD changes the climate for future projects. Producing successful projects leads to greater acceptance by both the development community and

the public, and thus makes it possible to introduce further innovations that increase the effectiveness of the next round of TODs.

### **California: Metropolitan Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area**

Despite the State's automobile oriented image, California has made some important strides in Transit Oriented Development. Over a decade ago, California enacted the Transit Villages Act of 1994. The Transit Villages Act is important in that it clearly establishes a state policy to encourage and establish the basic outlines of TOD in California. The legislation contains provisions allowing cities and counties to plan for transit village districts near existing or planned major transit facilities. It clearly states that TODs should be mixed use in character and provides for the use of transportation funding to develop transit village plans. While it stands as an important policy statement on TOD, even the most enlightened policy is not self-implementing. Unfortunately, the Transit Villages Act provided no implementation funding for TOD. In fact, public funding for TOD is scarce unless developments are in previously established local redevelopment areas.

In addition, a 2002 state law allows local governments to streamline the process of obtaining permits for infill development including TODs. This law essentially exempts many TODs from congestion mitigation rules that, although enacted with the intention of ensuring that development would not overwhelm an area's road infrastructure, could in specific cases have the unintended consequence of preventing the TODs that are an important tool in reducing traffic congestion. Smart Growth and Transit Oriented Development remain topics of great interest in California, but other than the measures outlined above, local governments have largely taken the initiative in encouraging TOD. As a result, our discussion of TOD in California focuses on the local level.

In this study we have examined TOD practice in two areas of the State. In the Los Angeles area, transit planning has generally been a matter of introducing transportation mode choices into already developed areas. Rail lines have been threaded into existing development, and the TOD that has been implemented has likewise had to deal with the realities of existing development.

In the San Francisco Bay area TOD is seen as an alternative to development that was increasingly shifting toward a pattern of exurban sprawl as the Bay Area increased in population at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. By capturing potential development that otherwise would have occurred on the exurban fringe, it was believed that the pollution, traffic, and loss of distinctive rural areas that accompany exurban development could likewise be reduced or avoided.

While these areas are different in character, Transit Oriented Development is an important part of the public debate about reshaping development in both areas.

Indeed it is a measure of the importance of TOD to the future of these two metropolitan areas that Fannie Mae selected Los Angeles and San Francisco as two of the four markets in which it conducted pilot studies of its Location Efficient Mortgage products. The Location Efficient Mortgage recognizes the transportation costs saved by TOD residents, allowing homebuyers in a TOD to devote greater proportions of income to housing costs.

## **Los Angeles**

Transit Oriented Development in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area typically involves some combination of the county and municipal governments, local redevelopment agencies, and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (METRO). METRO operates four light rail lines, one Bus Rapid Transit line, and over 2,000 buses in a 1,400 square mile service area. Weekday ridership is about 1.6 million.

Local governments bring planning expertise and favorable development controls, such as reduced parking requirements, density bonuses for developments near transit stations, and even prohibitions of non transit oriented development in identified TOD areas to the process. Local governments are not a promising source for substantial financial assistance because of limitations on their ability to levy taxes. Local redevelopment agencies are armed with powers to raise funds, such as the ability to issue bonds and levy special assessments on properties within their districts. They also have real estate industry experience that may be useful in creating TODs. METRO holds title to some land adjacent to rail stations that can be used for joint development projects.

TOD activity in Los Angeles centers around the stations of the four rail lines that were opened between 1990 and 2003. Some of these stations are located in vibrant commercial areas, but many of the stations serve economically depressed areas where investors may not be interested in undertaking a TOD. This has been compounded by difficulties in establishing a vibrant commercial presence in some Los Angeles TODs. Although it has only been in operation about one year, the Bus Rapid Transit based Orange Line does not seem to be generating as much developer interest in TODs as do the rail lines.

While there have been a number of successful TODs in the Los Angeles area, this success is not unqualified. For every successful Hollywood/Highland project, a mixed use TOD adjoining a rail station in the heart of Hollywood, there are sites adjacent to Blue Line stations in the City of Long Beach where new car washes and gas stations have been constructed. One concession that planners have made to the importance of automobiles in Los Angeles is to design TODs to make some developments a hybrid between traditional and Transit Oriented Development. Developments are planned to be readily accessible by private automobile, with a considerable amount of parking, generally contained in structures. The most convenient access to the site, however, is often by transit,



which delivers passengers to the heart of the development. It remains to be seen, however, if these hybrids can truly deliver the benefits seen in traditional TODs.

### **San Francisco Bay Area**

Coordination is a hallmark of planning for TODs in the San Francisco Bay Area. Because the area has nine county governments, a number of regional agencies, over forty transit providers, one hundred city governments, and a large complement of nonprofit organizations and private developers, there is not a single model for TOD in the Bay Area. The four major transit agencies in the Bay Area are: the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART), the San Francisco Municipal Railway (MUNI), Caltrain, and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Agency (VTA). Each of these agencies has been active in TOD.

Combined with these transit agency activities are a number of regional coordination efforts that have sought to guide development. In 1990 the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), the regional planning agency for the San Francisco area, adopted policies to provide for the development of new communities along transit corridors. In 2000 ABAG participated in a visioning process with five other regional agencies that was aimed at creating Smart Growth policies for the region. These policies are generally considered favorable to the growth of TOD. One of the participants in this visioning effort, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), which is the MPO responsible for transportation planning in the Bay Area, instituted its Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) program in 1998. The TLC program provides state and federal funds for planning, housing, and community amenities, even though these projects may not be considered directly transportation related.

In addition, some Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs) in the Bay Area have directed gas tax funds to TOD. CMAs are responsible for countywide transportation planning in California and their attitude toward TOD in the Bay Area has ranged from proactive to reactive. Where CMAs are willing to lend their support to TOD efforts; however, they can be an important source of funding for planning or amenities that are difficult to finance through other sources.

To date, BART has been rather cautious in its approach to TOD. While its substantial inventory of parking lots provides many attractive opportunities for joint development projects, BART requires that any parking lost be replaced on a one to one basis when the TOD project is complete. Further, as parking for BART is generally free of charge, there may be limited ability for a developer to collect fees to defray the cost of building structured parking. BART may also have less urgency in pursuing Joint Development because it has rather healthy farebox revenue and does not rely upon the revenues from joint development projects. These factors have allowed BART the luxury of evaluating the

prospects of a TOD project with a primary emphasis on increasing ridership in the long run.

As might be expected because it operates services with less elaborate station facilities in an area with less available developable land, MUNI has been somewhat less active in TOD than the other major Bay Area transit providers. Still, the construction of a light rail extension on The Embarcadero in the late 1990's and rail system expansions that are planned for the future have given MUNI the opportunity to become more involved in creating TODs.

Caltrain is in the initial stages of its involvement with TOD with the establishment of the Transbay Transit Center and a TOD on a 66-acre site made available by the removal of an old freeway. The Transit Center will create a new terminal for Caltrain as well as an intermodal bus center and provide space for a planned intercity high-speed rail service. The TOD will include 3,400 housing units, 1.2 million square feet of office space and 60,000 square feet of retail space. The hope is that the various elements of the plan will complement each other with the TOD gaining convenience from its proximity to the terminal and providing a 24-hour activity center that will reduce the isolation often felt at major intermodal facilities. In addition, communities with Caltrain station facilities are increasingly considering the station as an important asset in planning for their communities.

VTA participates in Transit Oriented Development through joint development projects and a cooperative planning process with the communities that it serves. The agency has created a set of TOD design guidelines to influence development near its stations. It also produces concept plans for new rail stations in cooperation with local governments, maintains a list of priority sites for TODs, and reviews proposed projects that are referred from local governments for their compatibility with transit service. While there has been some question about the vitality of retail use within its TODs, and the decline in the Silicon Valley economy and employment in the early 2000's slowed the pace of TOD creation, VTA has an aggressive system expansion plan. The Authority intends to continue its process of station area planning and participation in TOD in conjunction with its new facilities.

As is often the case, funding constraints limit the support that public agencies can provide for TOD in California. However, what has been accomplished in the Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay Areas with a general policy commitment to TOD at the state level, combined with strong local entities that are willing to throw their support behind either TOD generally or specific TOD projects, is remarkable. The other theme that becomes clear in looking at California is that transit agencies cannot "go it alone" in promoting TOD. Where these projects work well, or in fact work at all, they are the product of a collaborative process that includes not only the transit operator, but also local government and regional agencies as well as developers, community and advocacy groups, and the business community.

## Washington DC: WMATA

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's (WMATA) purposes in promoting TOD include influencing the form of the National Capital region to control traffic, reduce air pollution, and improve the overall quality of life. WMATA, however, has no dedicated funding and depends on contributions from the local jurisdictions that it serves, in addition to farebox revenues, to fund operations. This situation has led WMATA to seek out stable sources of revenue and has likely influenced the direction that WMATA has taken in its pursuit of TOD.

WMATA was created in 1967 by a compact between the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland and the District of Columbia. The Authority's purpose was to plan, develop, build, finance and operate a balanced regional transportation system in the National Capital area. Construction of the Metrorail system began in 1969 and the first phase of rail operation began in 1976. The Metrorail system serves 86 stations in areas that range from urban to exurban.

Financial matters have always assumed great importance in the operation of WMATA because the system was created without a dedicated funding source. As a result, the Authority has made a concentrated effort to establish its real estate holdings as a continuing revenue source. Early in its history, WMATA formed a real estate division, which assembled a sizable portfolio of property, mainly in vacant land. The Real Estate department and this portfolio form the basis of WMATA's large and successful TOD program. WMATA is especially active in the form of TOD known as Joint Development, in which the transit agency and developer partner to undertake a mutually advantageous project.

WMATA's goals in the use of its properties include promoting Smart Growth and TOD, attracting additional riders to the system, and creating a continuing revenue stream to fund the Authority's operations. Having an in house real estate department provided WMATA with the expertise that is necessary for an active Joint Development program to achieve these goals and allowed the agency to take a more entrepreneurial approach to land use issues than is the case at other transit agencies. While some of the property that WMATA acquired is required for operational purposes, much of it is available for development. Property in WMATA's Joint Development program is made available to developers through long term ground leases, which provide for a base rent and a percentage of the developer's proceeds, allowing WMATA to benefit financially from the success of the development.<sup>8</sup>

WMATA's success shows what a systematic approach to capturing the value created by transit, implemented by a professional real estate development staff,

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<sup>8</sup> The preference for long term ground leases was also due in part to Federal Transit Administration funding rules, which until relatively recently required the recapture of funds granted to purchase real property upon the sale of that property.

can achieve for a transit agency. As of 2003, WMATA had 54 joint development projects with a market value of \$4 billion. The developments produced an annual revenue stream of \$10 million, which was expected to rise to \$15 to \$17 million by 2005. It is estimated that these projects have generated 50,000 additional riders and 25,000 new jobs.

This success, however, is based upon WMATA's extensive real estate holdings and in some sense upon a willingness to become an active real estate developer. This approach has not been without critics, as some have seen in the agency a failure to truly combat sprawl in the outer portion of its service areas and a willingness to sacrifice true transit orientation to the desire to make a financially remunerative deal. Still, most people would argue that the WMATA program has been a success.

## CONCLUSIONS

The decline of transit use in response to the suburbanization of the United States in the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in part demonstrates the interrelationship between community design and transportation mode choice. Transit became less relevant during this time because it was not well suited to serve the transportation needs of low density suburban communities. This land use pattern continues to limit the use of transit in the MTA region. Transit Oriented Development is key to creating communities where transit will once again be seen as a primary option. While recent increases in the cost of driving have accounted for strong ridership gains, transit can only reach its full potential when the communities that it serves are well adapted to transit use.

Creating an environment that is conducive to transit use is more important when seen in the context of changing transit ridership patterns in the MTA region. Recent ridership trends generally indicate flat or even declining demand for travel in the traditional weekday peak periods, combined with significantly increased demand at other times, particularly evenings and weekends. These changes bring with them the potential for more efficient use of the transit system, but transit operators must capture this demand in order to realize these efficiencies.

As a result of the suburbanization of development in the last half century, this region's communities still have far to go to create conditions that invite transit use. New York City largely remains a collection of dense, walkable, mixed use neighborhoods. Also, many of the communities surrounding the stations on the Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad were established as compact, walkable communities, and the areas surrounding some of the stations have maintained this character. In too many parts of the commuter railroads' service areas, however, development that does not encourage transit use has become predominant, and local communities have essentially turned their backs on the original transit oriented centers.

The PCAC has outlined a number of benefits from returning development to compact, walkable centers with transit as a primary means of transportation. Among these benefits are the financial gain to transit agencies for the use of real property, the reduced parking demand near stations, and the expanded options available to residents. In spite of these benefits, obstacles to TOD remain, including a lack of capacity in government and transit agencies to further TOD, inhospitable policy and regulatory environments, inadequate political support, and public opposition.

Some steps toward promoting TOD within the MTA region have occurred. Metro-North Railroad has a great resource in its successful TOD planning effort at Beacon, where the Railroad is working to improve its station and establish it as the centerpiece of development in the area. It has a valuable body of experience to draw from in planning for other communities after having administered the

majority of the coordination, community outreach and visioning process that resulted in the plans for Beacon. Metro-North has also been involved in other TOD planning processes where it has not taken as prominent a leadership role. As improvements at Beacon continue, we expect that other communities will recognize that Metro-North stations can provide a focal point for high quality development that will enhance their towns.

As traffic congestion on Long Island has increased, some communities are beginning to look toward smart growth solutions. Other towns are recognizing that despite a booming land development climate, their traditional town centers have become unappreciated and underutilized. The political leadership of some of these towns has been receptive to dense, mixed use redevelopment of downtown areas, which, although generally not yet focused on connections to transit, is compatible with TOD models. Not every town has leadership that is receptive to this type of development, but there is a base upon which TOD could grow on Long Island. The Long Island Rail Road has largely not yet capitalized on the benefits of TOD. They do not view partnerships with organizations, municipalities, developers, or others interested in the TOD agenda as a primary part of their mission. The greatest disadvantage of this attitude is that the Rail Road is not harnessing the energies of the groups that could help achieve the goals of building a Main Line Third Track and a mid Suffolk rail yard and help increase ridership. Both of these projects would increase the operational flexibility and capacity of the Rail Road and could spur TOD.

New York City Transit faces a different environment from that of the commuter railroads both in terms of the land uses surrounding its stations and the political environment in which it operates. The New York City Department of City Planning is continually examining development opportunities within the City and has engaged in a number of planning processes aimed at the redevelopment of specific areas. NYC Transit has recently increased its interaction with City Planning becoming a more active partner in the planning process.

One way that NYC Transit has supported transit friendly development is by undertaking major capital improvements to the subway system. Although it may not be part of a formal TOD program, NYC Transit capital spending can serve as an important catalyst and support for redevelopment that is compatible with increased transit use. One example of this process can be seen in the Coney Island area, where NYC Transit's \$240 million investment in the Stillwell Terminal project is an important part of the public investment, including improvements to the boardwalk and the construction of KeySpan Park that forms the foundation for the redevelopment of the area.

For the most part, however, the role that NYC Transit is likely to play is to support the City's efforts and to collaborate in the development of specific plans to ensure that the result is compatible with transit capacity and operations. NYC Transit's involvement in the redevelopment of the west side of Manhattan is a large scale

example of this relationship, but there are a number of smaller planning processes where NYC Transit could also be involved.

There is reason to be encouraged at the prospects for TOD in the MTA region, but we must recognize that the MTA and its operating agencies can do much more to further TOD. We have discussed the promotion of TOD in several other states and the Washington DC metropolitan area and believe that New York State and the MTA can learn from these experiences. These TOD programs range from developing new mixed use communities using land owned or controlled by transit agencies to facilitating TOD projects that are being advanced by local governments and private developers.

The regulation of land use is properly a matter for local government, and we do not suggest that the MTA or its operating agencies usurp the role of towns and cities in this area. Instead, the role of the MTA and its agencies should lie in encouraging localities to tailor their development regulations and community development activities toward promoting TOD at appropriate sites, facilitating local efforts through technical assistance and identification of available resources, and partnering in the visioning and planning processes leading to the TOD.

The specific role that the MTA and its agencies will play is likely to vary from project to project. For example, Metro-North Railroad took a leading role in facilitating the planning process for the Beacon station area, while in other proposed TOD projects a municipality or developer has led the planning effort and Metro-North is one of a number of collaborators in the process. The MTA cannot lead every planning effort as its primary function is providing transportation, but the importance of development patterns to the future of transit throughout the MTA region demands that the MTA and its operating agencies be a part of the process.

Greater involvement in the planning process for TOD will require some changes in organization and relationships within the MTA family and between the MTA and New York State. TODs are complex entities and dealing with them will require a wide range of skills. The MTA has made a judgment that certain supporting services, such as real estate management, that are needed by the operating agencies are most efficiently provided within MTA Headquarters. If the MTA is to be involved with TOD, there will have to be increased collaboration between operating agencies and MTA Headquarters departments providing support services, as well as with state agencies which are involved in implementing Smart Growth principles.

Based on our study of Transit Oriented Development we have concluded that there are many benefits available to the MTA and its operating agencies through encouraging the development of TODs throughout the region. We have also concluded that there are many opportunities for implementing TOD within the

MTA region. Below we recommend specific actions to be taken by the State and the MTA to foster the development of TODs in the MTA region.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our examination of conditions within the MTA service area and TOD in areas throughout the United States, the PCAC has developed general recommendations for actions to be undertaken by the State of New York, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC), and the MTA and its operating agencies. These recommendations are designed to further the growth of Transit Oriented Development throughout New York State and the MTA region and to allow local communities and the MTA and its operating agencies to share in the benefits of TOD. Our recommendations are general in nature and do not specify the organizational structure to be created to address TOD issues or recommend specific sites because formal TOD programs in the MTA region are only in their early stages or yet to be initiated, .

### NEW YORK STATE

New York State must be the initial catalyst for successful Transit Oriented Development projects. The actions taken by the State, at both the executive and legislative levels, can set the stage for TOD by encouraging local agencies to more closely link land use and transportation in ways that promote a transit-friendly environment, to provide information and funding for planning and implementation, and to foster cooperation among state departments and agencies that impact local government planning and private sector development. TOD proponents often face significant delays and difficulties in securing local land use approvals for projects, even in areas where regional and local policies support such development. In addition, the State has an important role in developing and disseminating data and information about the effects and benefits of TOD in the areas of transportation, economics, and quality of life. This information is necessary in order to improve local government analysis of proposed TOD projects and could help expedite the local land use approval processes.

New York State must directly address the issue of Smart Growth and Transit Oriented Development and capitalize on the economic gains that can be leveraged from the \$50 billion capital investment that has been made in the MTA network over the past quarter century. We recommend that the State encourage TOD by:

- Developing a state Smart Growth policy through reexamining the work and recommendations developed by the Quality Communities Interagency Task Force in its report, *State and Local Governments: Partnering for a Better New York*.
- Evaluating the Hudson River Greenway program to determine if this Smart Growth program model can be extended to other parts of the State.

- Coordinating land use and transportation planning at all levels of government and with state government agencies responsible for transportation, housing, environment, agriculture, finance, economic development, health, recreation, and aging.
- Providing technical assistance through state departments to municipalities interested in implementing TOD projects.
- Implementing rules that require NYMTC to include elements in its transportation plans to reduce reliance on private automobiles.
- Examining state environmental review requirements to determine whether they raise unnecessary barriers to TOD.
- Evaluating the feasibility of using state-owned land near major transit stations as sites for TOD.
- Using state-owned land to link highways to transit stations to encourage TODs or make stations and TODs more accessible.
- Developing a program to purchase strategic real estate holdings surrounding existing transportation infrastructure.
- Conducting an inventory and maintaining a record of properties suitable for TOD near rail lines and stations.
- Considering laws and regulations that encourage TOD, such as state legislation that allows for partial property tax exemptions to be provided for TOD.
- Developing and making available private mortgage instruments, such as the “Smart Commute” program, that offers incentives to homebuyers in TODs.
- Providing funding for local jurisdictions to prepare plans and develop laws, ordinances, and regulations to facilitate transit-oriented development.
- Providing funding for TOD demonstration projects.
- Providing liability protection for brownfield development.
- Establishing a relationship with academic institutions to provide ongoing data collection and analysis of travel patterns and the economic impacts of TODs and for the incorporation of these data into improved analysis and decision-making tools.

## **NEW YORK METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL**

NYMTC, because of its vital role in approving federal funding for transportation projects, is in a unique position to motivate local governments to consider the linkages between land use and transportation and to encourage more efficient and sustainable land use patterns. NYMTC can exercise leadership in moving the region to more sustainable development patterns through its transportation planning programs. It can also provide background data and information to assist local planning efforts that further TOD. The PCAC recommends that NYMTC facilitate TOD by:

- Establishing a linkage between transportation planning and land use as a priority in the Regional Transportation Plan.
- Providing ongoing data collection and analysis of travel patterns and the economic impacts of TODs and incorporating these data into improved analysis and decision-making tools.
- Expanding the Sustainable Development Studies program, an inclusive, community based planning process aimed at developing complementary land use patterns and transportation systems.
- Removing the LITP 2000 from NYMTC's 2005-2030 Regional Transportation Plan and developing a new plan for Long Island that is based on the linkages between transportation and land use and that recognizes the LIRR as a vital component of any plan.

## **METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MTA)**

As the largest provider of public transportation service within its twelve-county region, the MTA is in a unique position to facilitate TOD and to provide improved linkages between transportation infrastructure and land use. Moreover, the continued health of the MTA and its operating agencies is impacted by the nature of the communities which they serve. The MTA can help to guide that form and provide for a stable future ridership by acting to make the MTA system and the region's communities complement each other. We recommend that the MTA and its operating agencies exercise a leadership role and take advantage of existing opportunities to encourage Transit Oriented Development throughout the region by:

### **MTA Headquarters**

MTA Headquarters has a particular opportunity to deal with TOD issues that transcend operating agency boundaries and set the tone for encouraging TOD in the MTA region. While the operating agencies face different environments relative to TOD and should be given the flexibility to design their own TOD

programs, MTA Headquarters can establish minimum expectations for TOD within the operating agencies. The PCAC recommends that MTA Headquarters exercise a leadership role and take advantage of existing opportunities to encourage Transit Oriented Development throughout the region by:

- Obtaining FHWA funding to create a TOD program that will allow the MTA to increase its staffing that specializes in TOD at all levels of MTAHQ and the operating agencies.
- Increasing its system-wide planning for TOD, assessing opportunities at each station site, and considering at the regional level the relationship between land uses around each station and their effect on ridership systemwide.
- Establishing a set of transportation and station area circulation guidelines and creating a best practices design manual to provide municipalities with tools to develop plans and assist them in considering rezonings or redevelopment plans.
- Incorporating Transit Oriented Development in each of the operating agencies' Strategic Business Plans.
- Conducting an inventory and maintaining a record of properties suitable for TOD near rail lines and stations.
- Developing a program to purchase strategic real estate holdings surrounding existing stations.
- Requiring that the operating agencies consult regularly with the MTA Real Estate, Planning, and Capital Program Management departments regarding the details of large potential projects that are under development or that they would like to develop.
- Working more actively with all the operating agencies to develop integrated marketing, planning, and real estate strategies for major projects from their inception.

### **Metro-North Railroad**

Metro-North has made important strides in the area of Transit Oriented Development in its involvement with the successful planning effort at Beacon. In addition, MNR has undertaken a number of initiatives, such as the Station Net Leasing program and parking and access improvements at Poughkeepsie that have the potential to support TODs associated with these stations. The PCAC's recommendations chiefly address ways for Metro-North to build upon its

successes and expand opportunities for TOD throughout its system because of this experience.

There is an existing institutional framework to support Smart Growth activities within Metro-North and its service area and a number of locations with potential for Transit Oriented Development. The PCAC recommends that Metro-North continue to leverage its considerable investments in the rail system, its institutional capacity, and its past successes to expand the Railroad's involvement in TOD by:

- Expanding the resources tied to the Strategic Intermodal Facilities and TOD programs. The successes in Beacon and Poughkeepsie have produced momentum and strengthened Metro-North's relationships with state and local agencies, creating the prospect of new levels of state and local coordination in the Railroad's service area. Increased capabilities would enable Metro-North to expand opportunities for coordinated planning with municipalities that are receptive to TOD.
- Capitalizing on the potential for increased station area activity created by the Station Net Leasing program by publicizing improved station services and hours of operation. For example, Metro-North could emphasize information regarding net lease tenants and the increased hours of operation on its *Stations* web page.
- Planning for both MNR property and the wider station area with the aim of fostering long-term rather than short-term value. Because MNR has a long term investment in its rail infrastructure, its time horizon in evaluating the use of its resources should be considerably longer than that of an investor who seeks to receive a return and move on within a relatively short time following the completion of a project.
- Emphasizing in the creation of station access plans the relationships between the station and adjacent land uses, as well as the benefits that can be derived through fully integrating the station into the life of the surrounding area.

### **Long Island Rail Road**

With over 170 years of history on Long Island and daily ridership of nearly 282,000, the LIRR is an important part of Long Island's transportation system. The Rail Road has profoundly influenced the settlement patterns of Long Island, and although the expansion of the Island's highway system in the last 60 years has eroded that influence somewhat, severe congestion on these roads presents an opportunity for the Rail Road to capture greater numbers of riders and once again shape the development of Long Island. To guide the development of Long

Island to a pattern that is better targeted to the interests of the LIRR and the community as a whole, however, a multifaceted approach that coordinates land use with transit and other public infrastructure is needed. The LIRR has begun such an approach with the Village of Mineola.

The PCAC found that improving this coordination is one of the major challenges facing the LIRR. This is no small task, as it will require an inclusive planning process bringing state, county, and municipal governments, regional planning bodies, major non profit and private sector stakeholders, and the public at large together with the LIRR. Improved coordination would not only allow the LIRR to draw upon additional resources and to ensure that its viewpoint is included in the planning process, but also allow the LIRR to assist and empower municipalities to improve their local communities. The PCAC recommends that the LIRR support transit oriented development and strengthen its role in the planning process by:

- Strengthening the relationship between the LIRR and MTAHQ. The LIRR should make more effective use of the resources of the MTA Real Estate, Planning and Capital Program Management departments beginning with the initial phases of a project. Current issues where MTAHQ resources could be valuable to the LIRR are the process of siting a mid-Suffolk yard, planning for the development of Suffolk County owned property at Yaphank, and clarifying potential interrelationships between these two efforts.
- Establishing a TOD program that can both respond to opportunities and local planning efforts and take a leadership role in initiating projects. The program should actively promote and support the efforts of municipalities, developers, and community organizations to establish TODs.
- Planning for both LIRR property and the wider station area with the aim of fostering long-term rather than short-term value. Because the LIRR has a long term investment in its rail infrastructure, its time horizon in evaluating the use of its resources should be considerably longer than that of an investor who seeks to receive a return and move on within a relatively short time following the completion of a project.
- Implementing a net leasing program for station facilities. By leasing stations to private operators, the LIRR can retain space for its essential services and customer waiting areas, but be freed of the responsibility of maintaining the station facility. Leasing to an operator such as a restaurant or café also has the advantages of expanding the hours that station facilities are open and increasing the activity level in the station area.

- Adopting a comprehensive approach to improving station access, including expanding connecting services, undertaking parking and pedestrian improvements, and improving vehicular and pedestrian routes and signage near stations. A basic initiative that could be valuable in supporting station area development is the installation of wayfinding signage directing motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians from major transportation routes to LIRR stations.

### **New York City Transit**

Although NYC Transit is likely to have a limited role in the initiation of TOD projects, Transit's involvement with the development process is crucial in maintaining the efficient movement of residents, workers, and visitors throughout the City and in creating and maintaining walkable neighborhoods. While there may be some individual projects where NYC Transit can be an active partner in the redevelopment of areas near subway stations, its more typical role will be as a collaborator in the City's neighborhood planning process.

This collaboration can take several forms, from coordinating major transit improvements with the redevelopment of large areas, to supporting more limited redevelopment taking place in the neighborhoods through improving transit infrastructure, to directing development to areas where capacity exists to serve new residents and workers. By becoming a partner in the planning process, NYC Transit can encourage development patterns that will not only improve the City environment, but also solidify its ridership base and make the most efficient use of its resources. We recommend that NYC Transit work to further TOD in the City by:

- Creating a Smart Growth group within NYC Transit that is responsible for coordinating transit needs and land use issues.
- Fostering a working relationship with the Department of City Planning to ensure that serious consideration of public transportation plans, resources, and capacities is included in reviewing any large scale development project undertaken within the five boroughs.
- Working with New York City officials to ensure that adequate access to public transit is available and related transit amenities are included in plans for development or redevelopment projects throughout the City.
- Focusing on directing development to areas where capacity exists to serve new residents and workers. In working with the City, NYC Transit can emphasize areas where system capacity is available or make adjustments to system operations to free capacity to serve growing neighborhoods. By becoming a partner in the planning process, NYC Transit can try to encourage development patterns that will not only

improve the City environment, but also solidify its ridership base and make the most efficient use of its resources.



## Appendix A

## **Useful Transit Oriented Development Websites:**

Transit Oriented Development at the Vorhees Center for Transportation  
<http://www.policy.rutgers.edu/vtc/tod/>

Center for Transit Oriented Development  
[www.Reconnectingamerica.com](http://www.Reconnectingamerica.com)

New Jersey Transit: Transit Friendly Land Use  
[http://www.njtransit.com/tm/tm\\_servlet.srv?hdnPageAction=TransitFriendlyTo](http://www.njtransit.com/tm/tm_servlet.srv?hdnPageAction=TransitFriendlyTo)

New Jersey Department of Transportation  
<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/works/njfit/toolbox/transit.shtm>

Vision Long Island  
[www.visionlongisland.org](http://www.visionlongisland.org)

California DOT: Statewide Transit Oriented Development Study: Factors for Success in California: Final Report September 2002  
[http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/MassTrans/doc\\_pdf/TOD/Statewide TOD Study Final\\_Report\\_Sept%2002.pdf](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/MassTrans/doc_pdf/TOD/Statewide_TOD_Study_Final_Report_Sept%2002.pdf)

It Takes a Transit Village: How Better Planning Can Save the Bay Area Billions of Dollars and Ease the Housing Shortage  
<http://www.transcoalition.org/reports/village/village.pdf>

Creating Livable Communities Through Transit - Denver  
<http://www.environmentcolorado.org/reports/CreatingLivableCommunities.pdf>

WMATA: Washington DC  
Joint Development Policy Program: Goal – To Promote TOD  
[http://www.wmata.com/bus2bus/jd/revised\\_policies/RevisedGuidelines.pdf](http://www.wmata.com/bus2bus/jd/revised_policies/RevisedGuidelines.pdf)

Parking Structures  
<http://www.traditional-building.com/palladio/pallwin4.htm>