

## INTERCITY RAIL AND TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

**Making Connections,  
Building Communities**



One in a series of best practices guidebooks from  
the Center for Transit-Oriented Development

**The Center for Transit-Oriented Development** (CTOD) is the only national nonprofit effort dedicated to providing best practices, research and tools to support market-based transit-oriented development. CTOD partners with both the public and private market sectors to strategize about ways to encourage the development of high performing communities around transit stations and to build transit systems that maximize development potential. CTOD works to integrate local and regional planning, generate new tools for economic development, real estate and investment issues, improve affordability and livability for all members of the community, and respond to imperatives for climate change and sustainability. The Center for TOD is a partnership of Reconnecting America, the Center for Neighborhood Technology, and Strategic Economics. For more information go to CTOD's website at [www.ctod.org](http://www.ctod.org).

**Reconnecting America** is a national nonprofit working to integrate transportation systems and the communities they serve to provide more connectivity and livability for all Americans whether they live in urban areas, small towns, or rural communities. Reconnecting America's goal is to generate lasting public and private returns, improve economic and environmental efficiency, and give consumers more transportation and housing choices. For more information visit [www.reconnectingamerica.org](http://www.reconnectingamerica.org).

**The Center for Neighborhood Technology** is a creative think-and-do tank that combines rigorous research with effective solutions. CNT works across disciplines and issues, including transportation and community development, energy, natural resources, and climate change. The goal is urban sustainability – the more effective use of resources and assets to improve the health of natural systems and the wealth of people. [www.cnt.org](http://www.cnt.org)

**Strategic Economics** is a consulting and research firm specializing in urban and regional economics and planning. The firm helps local governments, community groups, developers and nonprofit organizations understand the economic and development context in which they operate in order to take strategic steps toward creating high-quality places for people to live and work. [www.strategieconomics.com](http://www.strategieconomics.com)

Primary Authors: Sarah Kline, Elizabeth Wampler, and Chris Yake, Reconnecting America.

This best practices guidebook is one in an ongoing series explaining the theory and best practices of transit-oriented development. All the books in the series are available as downloadable PDFs at [ctod.org/tod-ucation.php](http://ctod.org/tod-ucation.php).

Other guidebooks in the series include:

TOD 101 Why TOD And Why Now?

TOD 201 Mixed-Income Housing Near Transit: Increasing Affordability With Location Efficiency

TOD 202 Station Area Planning: How To Make Great Transit-Oriented Places

TOD 202 Transit & Employment: Increasing Transit's Share Of The Commute Trip

TOD 203 Transit Corridors and TOD: Connecting The Dots

TOD 204 Planning for TOD at the Regional Scale: The Big Picture

TOD 205: Families and TOD: Creating Complete Communities for All

**On the Cover:** *Chicago's Union Station* by *swaksalot* and *Downtown Salisbury, NC* by *Steve Minor*.

# Table Of Contents

<b>Why This Book?</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>The Intercity Rail Network Today</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Corridor Context: Categories of Passenger Rail Service</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Why TOD and Intercity Rail</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Intercity Rail Station Typology</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Strategies for Capturing the Benefits of Intercity Rail Stations</b> .....	<b>13</b>
■ <i>Understand Your Station Type and TOD Potential</i> .....	<i>14</i>
■ <i>Get Centered: Connect and Strengthen Cores of Cities and Towns</i> .....	<i>16</i>
■ <i>Develop a Vision Built on Consensus</i> .....	<i>18</i>
■ <i>Make It Multimodal</i> .....	<i>20</i>
■ <i>Make It Work for Everyone</i> .....	<i>22</i>
<b>Coordination Is Crucial</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>Federal Tools For Station Area Multimodality</b> .....	<b>26</b>

# Why This Book?

**MORE THAN 522 INTERCITY RAIL STATIONS** are in use today in communities of many shapes and sizes but few have tapped into their full potential. In addition to serving as a station for passengers boarding trains, these stations can be the focus of transformational land use planning. This booklet will lay out the case for why cities and towns should think of their intercity rail stations as a resource and a focal point for land use planning.



In San Diego, the Pacific Surfliner route makes a stop in the heart of downtown, where the Amtrak station connects with local transit options at the Santa Fe Depot.

Amtrak, the nation's intercity passenger rail service, runs routes that serve more than 500 destinations in 46 states and three Canadian provinces, and there is a growing demand for new and improved intercity passenger rail service. As of this writing, 39 states, the District of Columbia, and Amtrak have filed applications for Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) funding for intercity rail improvements totaling \$75 billion, well in excess of available resources. Since 2009, more than \$10 billion has been provided by FRA through the High-Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail Program, and some states are currently providing funding or raising money through sales taxes to support intercity rail.

Typically, we think of transit-oriented development (TOD) as compact, mixed-use development near an intracity transit station. These stations are usually stops on light rail, subway or streetcar lines, and can strengthen existing development as well as be a magnet for new development based on frequent and reliable transit service and connections to major destinations, including job centers, educational institutions, hospitals, etc. While the frequency and purpose of trips taken on intercity rail may be very different from that of intracity transit, intercity stations can also be the focal point for TOD. This is particularly true for higher speed intercity rail, such

as the existing Acela Corridor in the Northeast, or the planned high-speed rail line in California. However, intercity rail does not have to be "high-speed" in order for the stations to be important place-making centers.

This booklet identifies some of the different steps cities and towns can take to create TOD around their intercity rail stations. It also offers some useful tools and examples of how cities of a range of sizes are utilizing their intercity rail stations to revitalize downtowns, preserve historic buildings, create connections to other forms of transportation, and more.

# The Intercity Rail Network Today

**INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE**<sup>1</sup> in the United States today is almost entirely operated by Amtrak, officially known as the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, a government-created, private corporation. Amtrak was formed by Congress in 1970 under the Rail Passenger Service Act as a response to the severe financial difficulties then facing most private railroads, which since the mid-19th century had provided both passenger and freight service. Although Congress freed private railroads from the obligation of carrying passengers, it still recognized the need to provide intercity passenger rail transportation in the United States. The Rail Passenger Service Act specifically states: “The Congress finds that modern, efficient, intercity railroad passenger service is a necessary part of a balanced transportation system.”

Amtrak began service on May 1, 1971, and today operates intercity passenger rail service along a nationwide network of tracks that are primarily still owned by freight railroads. Amtrak operates more than 300 trains per day over more than 40 routes, serving more than 500 destinations and carrying an average of 78,500 passengers.<sup>2</sup> Amtrak owns 105 stations, and is responsible for the maintenance of an additional 181 stations and 411 platforms. Remaining stations are owned by a variety of entities, including municipalities and private companies.

Funding for intercity passenger rail comes from a variety of sources. Passenger fares cover more than half of total operating expenses. In addition to the basic cost of operating trains and paying conductors, engineers, and other staff, the system must pay for equipment, facilities, and tracks and other infrastructure.

The federal government and some states provide additional funding support, especially for capital expenditures. At the federal level, the annual appropriations process can lead to a funding stream that fluctuates from year to year, complicating long-term planning. It is heavily influenced by factors such as national economic conditions and, more importantly, by the role Congress envisions for intercity passenger rail within the nation’s overall transportation system. Private freight railroads also contribute through their investment in the shared rail infrastructure. However, funding sources have not kept pace with the need for maintenance and upgrades in Amtrak’s vehicles, facilities, tracks, and other infrastructure, leaving a backlog of unmet capital investment needs, particularly in the Northeast Corridor.

Amtrak’s service is divided into three categories based on differences in track ownership and operating support. Each service category has different implications for the potential TOD opportunities around the rail stations.

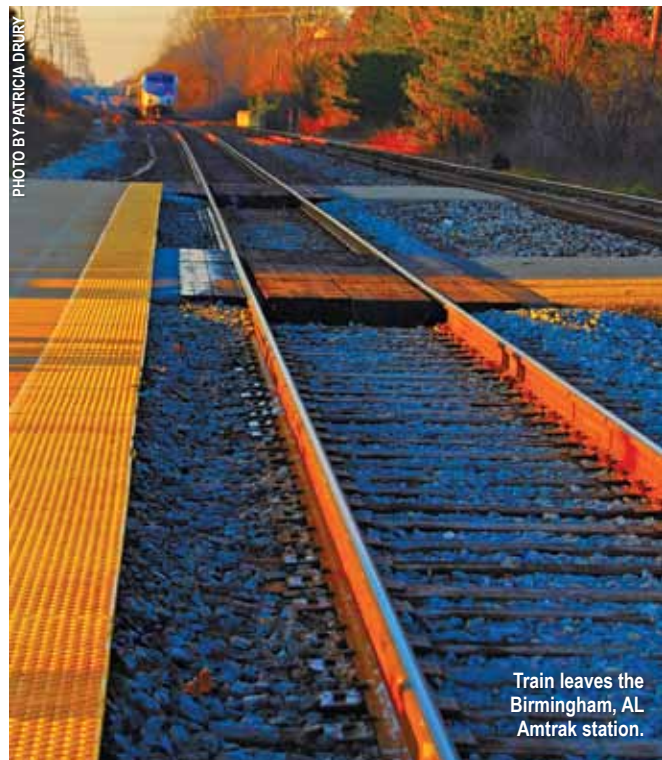


1. For purposes of this section, “intercity passenger rail” refers to passenger service provided by Amtrak that does not qualify for federal assistance under Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs.

2. Amtrak Fiscal Year 2012 Budget and Comprehensive Business Plan.

# Corridor Context: Categories of Passenger Rail Service

**LONG-DISTANCE ROUTES RUN** more than 600 miles. Amtrak currently operates 15 long-distance lines ranging from 764 route miles to 2,438 route miles. The 1,377-mile Crescent connecting New Orleans to New York City via Atlanta is one example of a long-distance route. In addition to connecting major cities, these routes often run through smaller, more rural communities. These routes provide an alternative to air travel between these small communities and the nearest airline hub, and are also well-utilized by senior citizens and passengers with disabilities. About 15% of Amtrak's ridership comes from long-distance routes. Most passengers on long-distance routes ride shorter portions of the route, but some ride the entire length of the line. Long-distance routes often travel the same corridors as regional or commuter rail, effectively increasing the frequency of those shorter runs. For example, when traveling from Seattle to Portland riders can choose to take the regional Amtrak Cascades line or the long-distance Coast Starlight that ultimately reaches Los Angeles.



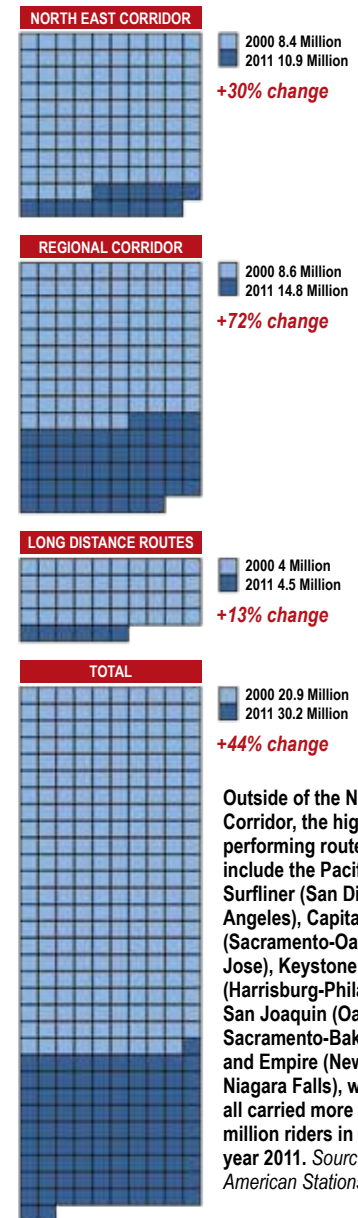
Train leaves the Birmingham, AL Amtrak station.

Regional and state-supported routes serve shorter-distance trips of less than 600 miles. California's Pacific Surfliner (connecting San Diego to Los Angeles) is one example of a regional route. Trips of this length can compete with increasingly congested intercity car and air trips; ridership on these lines has increased by 72% in the last decade. Today, regional routes account for just under half of all Amtrak ridership. Many regional routes are also state-supported; Amtrak partners with 18 states and regional transportation authorities to provide enhanced train service in those regions.

The Northeast Corridor (NEC), which extends from Washington, DC, to Boston, MA, is technically a regional route, but as the nation's most heavily trafficked rail corridor, it holds a unique place in the Amtrak network. The NEC is highly competitive with air and auto travel, and its ridership (which accounts for about a third of Amtrak's total ridership) benefits from the dense string of population centers from the

Mid-Atlantic to New England; the congestion on Interstate 95 and in that air corridor; and a long heritage of rail travel. The Acela runs on the NEC and is currently Amtrak's highest speed service, with trains reaching 150 mph on portions of the route. Since 2000, when Acela service was first introduced, intercity rail's share of the Washington, DC, to New York Air-Rail Market has increased from 37% to nearly 70%.

## Change In Annual Ridership 2000-2011 (in millions)



## CASE STUDIES

### Amtrak Cascades Corridor

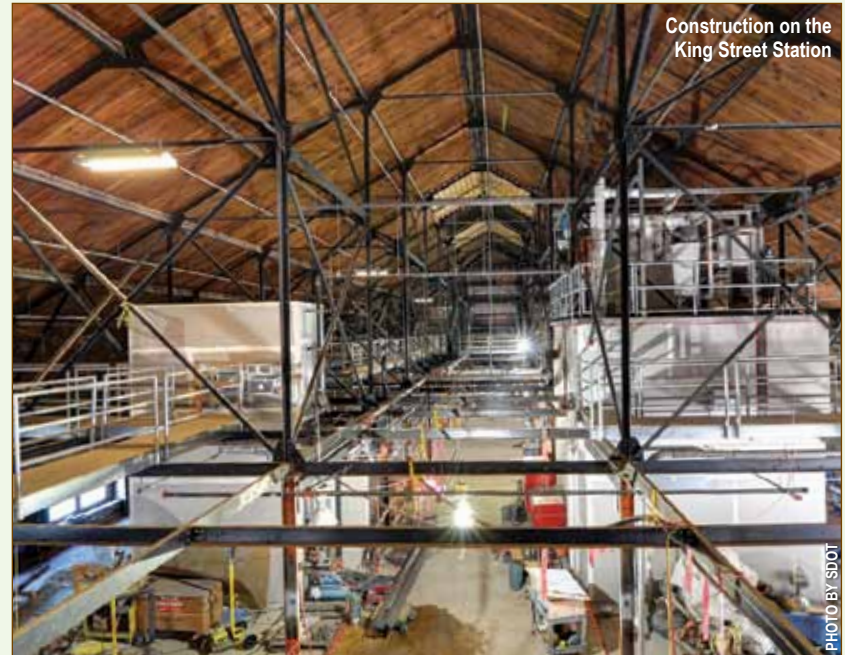
Connecting 18 cities and towns in the Pacific Northwest from Eugene, OR, to Vancouver, BC, the 466-mile Amtrak Cascades corridor has become a model of cooperation among national, state, and local partners, including a Canadian province. Since 1993, when the states of Oregon and Washington began financially supporting this route to help alleviate traffic on the heavily congested Interstate 5 corridor, annual ridership has grown from 94,000 to more than 850,000 passengers in 2011. This growth is expected to continue as the number of daily round-trips in the heart of the corridor increases from four to 13 in the next 20 years. Service will also become more reliable and faster, thanks to funding from the High-Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) program, which will increase travel speeds from 79 mph to 90-110 mph with new bypass tracks, upgrades to warning signal systems, station upgrades, and a more direct alignment near Tacoma, WA.

As the states and federal government have invested in improved rail service, local jurisdictions have sought to capitalize on the downtown revitalization and placemaking potential of stations. Nowhere is this more evident than in Portland and Seattle.



### Portland Union Station

Now seamlessly connected to TriMet's MAX light rail system, Portland's Union Station continues to evolve as a mixed-use, multimodal hub in the heart of an urban neighborhood. The Portland Development Commission (PDC), the city's urban renewal agency, acquired the station and 31 surrounding acres of rail yards in 1987. The City has since invested tax increment revenues and leveraged state and federal funds to upgrade the facility while also restoring and preserving historic elements. The commission now collects more than \$200,000 annually in leases with more than 30 tenants, including Amtrak, a restaurant and piano bar and upper-floor office space.



### King Street Station

Situated between the sports stadiums of SoDo (South Downtown) and historic Pioneer Square, King Street Station in downtown Seattle is an ideal entry point to local and regional destinations. In addition to the nearly 700,000 Amtrak passengers it serves on an annual basis, 1.5 million commuters on Sound Transit's Sounder service use the station that is now linked to the Central Link light rail. Recognizing its growing prominence in the local and regional transportation network, Seattle purchased the station in 2008 from Burlington Northern-Santa Fe. With more than \$50 million committed by partners ranging from FTA to local business groups, the city is leading efforts to enhance the accessibility of the station and restore its former grandeur after years of neglect.

# Why TOD and Intercity Rail?

Interest in TOD has grown across the country to achieve multiple goals:

- Create a sense of community and place.
- Improve access to jobs for households of all incomes.
- Increase transit ridership and transit agency revenues.
- Reduce automobile trips, vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Support economic development near transit.
- Reduce infrastructure costs for cities and counties compared to what is required to support sprawling growth.
- Reduce transportation costs for residents.
- Improve public health due to increased opportunities for walking and biking.
- Catalyze community revitalization.

**TOD IS WELL-SUITED** to achieve these goals because when jobs, stores, services, and homes are clustered around high-quality transit nodes, people can choose to drive less often — saving money, reducing congestion, and helping the environment. While more and more cities are planning for TOD around their intracity transit stations, intercity rail stations can also be the focal point for TOD.



Recently, new development has been springing up around Chicago's Union Station in the West Loop.



Cincinnati's historic train depot is decorated with murals.



Retail and public spaces inside Kansas City's Union Station.

**HOWEVER, INTERCITY RAIL** provides a different kind of service than intracity rail, which impacts the TOD potential of these stations. Intercity lines do not run as frequently as intracity transit, and because they operate over longer distances, most people will not use intercity rail regularly for commuting or daily errands. The type of

rail corridor (see Corridor Context), the location of the station within the city or town, and the connections to local transit, among other factors, will play a major role in determining whether the station can effectively attract development. Still, these station areas can include the components of TOD, such as:



- **COMPACT COMMUNITIES:** The specific densities that are right for a neighborhood around an intercity station will depend on the existing densities in the town or city and the station type (see pages 10-11). Stations with multimodal connections, where local destinations are accessible without a car, can support higher densities.

- **A MIX OF USES:** The “right” mix of uses will depend on the role the station plays in the intercity rail network and where the station is located in a town or region. When the rail service acts as a focal point for development, uses may include hotels for business travelers, as well as conference rooms, office space, and restaurants. Employers locating near stations with frequent service will be those for whom in-person meetings with clients or partners are particularly important. Areas seeking to attract tourists will need attractions, retail and accommodations geared toward visitors.

- **MIXED-INCOME HOUSING:** TOD around intercity rail should consider housing opportunities for a range of incomes. Both higher-income travelers and middle- or lower-income individuals employed in the area can benefit from living nearby. Residential uses may be located farther from the station than office, entertainment, and other commercial development.

- **WALKABLE STREETS:** Getting the right mix of commercial and residential development near the station will only achieve the goals of TOD if there is a network of walkable and bikeable streets connecting the various land uses with each other and with the



The Amtrak station in Pittsburgh is located on the north end of the Golden Triangle, the city’s primary business and cultural district. Market Square, shown above and below, is a short walk from the station.



station. People need to feel that it is safe and convenient to go from their home to the train, or from their office to a nearby restaurant.

- **MULTIPLE TRAVEL OPTIONS:** Unlike an intracity transit station, an intercity rail station is often the entry point to the city or town for travelers from other parts of the region or the country. By providing well-integrated transit, bicycle, taxi, and car-sharing options, train riders will be able to reach their final destination without having to rent a car, saving them money and increasing the likelihood that they would take the train rather than simply driving from their point of origin.

- **PUBLIC SPACES:** Public spaces for recreation, community events, or just people-watching have proven to be very important in attracting support for TOD projects. Providing a space for concerts, farmers markets, or other public gatherings can make the area around a train station a true community hub. Public spaces such as these can re-center the rail station and the surrounding TOD with its community. The rail station itself can be an important asset in this regard. Many rail stations were designed as public spaces in the early part of the last century, and therefore have the architectural elements needed to house community events today.

The next section outlines four types of intercity rail stations and how those types affect the scale of development that may be planned for the areas around those stations.

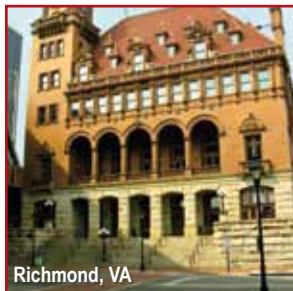
**LIKE LOCAL TRANSIT STATIONS**, no two intercity rail station areas are exactly alike. Each one is unique in terms of its surrounding built and social environment, frequency of service, multimodal connectivity and the physical station itself. Whereas grand terminals in large Northeastern and Midwestern cities are embedded within dense 24-hour central business districts (CBDs) and function much like airports, long-distance stations in rural communities and small towns may be little more than a rail platform with only one train a day.

This booklet groups intercity rail stations into four different “types” that begin to define the TOD potential around stations. This typology is based primarily on annual station ridership and includes descriptions of the typical location, multimodal connections, and TOD opportunities at stations of these different types.

**Grand Central Stations** are major rail transportation centers that are similar to major airline hubs in that they carry significantly higher volumes of passenger traffic compared to the national network. In 2011, eight stations across the system accommodated close to a million or more passengers, with New York’s Penn Station leading the way at nearly 9 million. These stations have the most multimodal and intermodal transportation options.



**TOD IMPLICATIONS** The many passengers support a vibrant mix of uses around these stations. Because Grand Central Stations are embedded within the central business districts of major 24-hour metropolitan cities, office and supportive retail are the most common development found nearby. Mixed-income housing, hotels and entertainment uses may also locate nearby. These stations are hubs for local and regional bus and rail service, private taxis and shuttles. They have strong pedestrian connections and little to no surface parking.



**Regional Hubs** are major regional destinations and transfer points for intercity travel. Annual ridership at these stations ranges between 500,000 and 1 million. Whereas Regional Hubs are often final destinations in the West (Portland, OR; San Diego, CA), they tend to be intermediate stations along the Northeast Corridor (Wilmington, DE; Stamford, CT). Multimodal connectivity is strong, but may be limited in cities with less developed transit networks.

# Intercity Rail Station Typology

TYPE	ANNUAL RIDERSHIP	TYPICAL LOCATION
<b>Grand Central Stations</b>	Above 1 million	Dense CBDs in major US cities with high concentrations of employment, entertainment, and institutional destinations
<b>Regional Hubs</b>	500,000 to 1 million	CBDs in regional US cities with concentrations of employment, entertainment, and institutional destinations
<b>Commuter Stations</b>	100,000 to 500,000	Centers of both historic downtowns and new suburban communities within major metropolitan regions
<b>Gateway Stations</b>	Below 100,000	Historic depots and downtowns in smaller communities and rural areas

PHOTOS BY: MICHAEL KAPPEL, LSBENTZ, STEPHEN GRAHAM, AND JOHN ROBERT SMITH.

MULTIMODAL CONNECTIONS	POTENTIAL TOD OPPORTUNITIES	EXAMPLES
Extensive heavy and light rail transit, commuter rail, private shuttles and taxi service	Office and supportive retail most likely. Also hotels and entertainment uses. Some mixed-income residential	New York, NY; Washington, DC; Chicago, IL; Los Angeles, CA; Philadelphia, PA
Rail transit in some markets, bus transit, private shuttles and taxi service	Primarily employment and entertainment, but also may include downtown-style mixed-income residential.	Providence, RI; Milwaukee, WA; Portland, OR; Richmond, VA
Park and ride, rail transit in some markets, bus transit, private shuttles and taxi service	Will vary depending on local context. Can include mixed-income residential, station-oriented retail and services	Fredericksburg, VA; Warwick, RI; Vancouver, WA
Limited multimodal connections with some local bus connections and on demand taxi service	Historic preservation, mixed-income residential, modest station-oriented retail and services	Meridian, MS; Freeport, ME

**TOD IMPLICATIONS** Located in the heart of midsize and large US cities, office and entertainment uses may be the most common around these stations, with secondary residential and visitor-focused uses also possible. The scale of potential development is lower around Regional Hubs than Grand Central Stations.

**Commuter Stations** are located along major regional routes and may serve as departure points for long-distance travelers as well as regional commuters. These stations typically have between 100,000 and 500,000 annual

passengers. Connectivity to transportation options is more limited with local transit connections focused during peak hours.



**TOD IMPLICATIONS** The areas around these stations range from downtowns of historic bedroom communities to more suburban-style neighborhoods. The type and scale of potential development is tied less to the connectivity provided by the intercity rail and more to the neighborhoods and planning

initiatives, and may include some mixed-income residential and station-oriented retail and services.

**Gateway Stations** are intermediate stations along Amtrak's long-distance routes. They can be found in small historic downtowns and rural communities across the country. Annual ridership is typically less than 100,000, reflecting the limited number of trains passing through the station each day. Commuters are far less likely to use these stations given that on-time arrivals are less reliable on long-distance routes.



**TOD IMPLICATIONS** The TOD potential of these stations will rely almost entirely on local efforts--the transit service provided at these stations is likely not frequent or timed in such a way to support development. Despite these constraints, many smaller communities across the country have restored their historic train depots and used them as the symbolic centerpieces of larger downtown revitalization efforts. If these stations also serve as hubs for local transit networks, that can increase their TOD potential.

## From Mississippi to Montana, Gateway Stations Help Achieve Local Goals

WHILE A GATEWAY STATION may not be able to attract the ridership or development of a Grand Central Station, these stations are major assets and can serve as focal points for historic preservation and downtown or main street revitalization.

In these smaller towns and rural areas, TOD will have many of the same characteristics as in urban places, but at a different scale. For example, a mix of uses is still important, but the businesses located near the station may be main street-type retail serving residents and tourists. Buildings may be 2 or 3 stories, rather than the high-rises associated with more urban TOD. Community gathering spaces can be just as, if not more, important in small towns and rural areas as they are in more urban neighborhoods. The rail station can become the hub of community life in a rural area, without changing its small town character.

The case studies on this page illustrate how two small cities in different parts of the country used their rail stations to help achieve local goals.

### WHITEFISH, MT: *Creating a Gateway to Regional Opportunity*

Gateway Stations can brand themselves as tourist entry points, as Amtrak's Whitefish station in Montana has done. Set against the backdrop of the Rocky Mountains, the historic Tudor



PHOTO BY RYAN CLAUSSEN

Revival station exhibits the highest station ridership between St. Paul, MN, and the Pacific Ocean on Amtrak's Empire Builder connecting Chicago to Seattle. In addition to the sometimes brutal winter conditions that make auto travel highly undesirable, ridership has been attributed to local leadership marketing the station as a jumping off point for outdoor recreational opportunities such as Glacier National Park. A model for other Gateway station communities, the town's civic leaders and business community have advocated for intercity rail travel and actively promote it to potential visitors.



PHOTOS BY JOHN ROBERT SMITH

### MERIDIAN, MS: *Reviving a Small Downtown through Redevelopment of an Historic Station*

Meridian, MS, a small city of 40,000, revitalized its downtown and became a regional destination by redeveloping its historic train station into a focal point for civic activity. Under the leadership of former Mayor John Robert Smith (currently President and CEO of Reconnecting America), the city began by establishing a vision

that could inspire its residents and building partnerships with the state and federal government, Amtrak, community organizations, and private developers. The \$6.6 million Union Station redevelopment project led to private development of \$135 million in the surrounding area,



including retail, restaurants, and residential projects. A HUD HOPE VI grant supported the development of low- to middle-income housing accessible by transit. The redevelopment effort also included market rate and upscale condominiums, a restored City Hall, a new fire department, and a state-of-the-art performance and conference facility.

# Strategies for Capturing the Benefits of Intercity Rail Stations



**THERE ARE MANY PUZZLE PIECES** that must be put together in order to make successful TOD around intercity rail stations. The following section highlights five strategies to achieve that end:

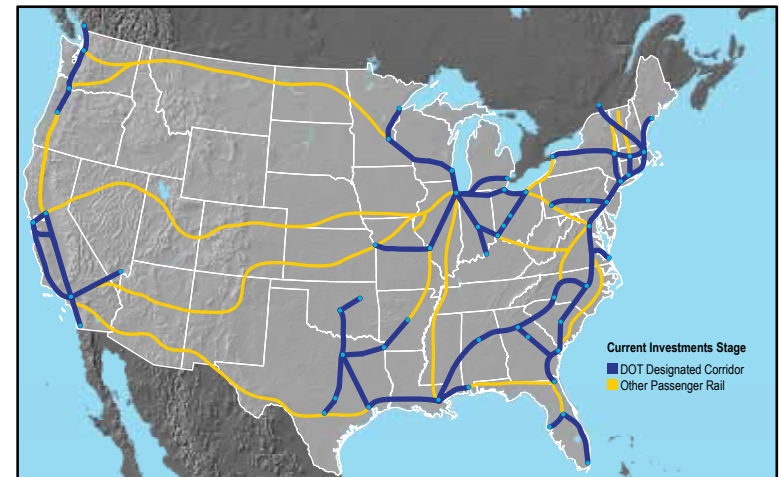
- 1 Understand Your Station Type
- 2 Get Centered: Connect and Strengthen Cores of Cities and Small Towns
- 3 Develop a Vision Built on Consensus
- 4 Make It Multimodal
- 5 Make it Work for Everyone

These strategies are specific for intercity rail, but the TOD 200 series booklets offer a wealth of resources and information on station area planning, regional planning for TOD, and more. Visit CTOD's website to read these booklets: [www.ctod.org](http://www.ctod.org)

## A NOTE ON Station Area Planning and High-Speed Rail

Intercity rail service – in particular “high-speed rail” – has become a hot topic in recent years, due in part to President Obama's goal, expressed in his State of the Union Address in 2011, of giving 80% of Americans access to high-speed rail within 25 years, and the momentum toward construction in California, the Midwest, and elsewhere. Both supporters and skeptics of high-speed rail are having their say, and many projects are in limbo awaiting funding or political and community support. As communities are considering plans for their existing or future rail stations and station areas, it is important to keep in mind that major infrastructure projects often take many years and even decades to complete, and yet actions taken today can have a direct impact on the future success of such projects. In particular, station location and other land use decisions adopted today can have a fundamental impact on the success of future high-speed rail. The possibility of future improvements in rail service and frequency, particularly for stations on designated high-speed rail corridors, should be taken into account when planning for station area development.

The goals and strategies outlined in this section aim to be a guide both for existing intercity rail stations and for planning efforts around future high-speed and intercity rail stations.



This map shows the DOT designated high speed rail corridors overlaid with existing passenger rail service. Source: Federal Railroad Administration, Reconnecting America

## 1. Understand Your Station Type and TOD Potential

**NEW AND EXISTING** intercity rail stations offer local governments the opportunity to make great, multimodal places at the centers of their communities. But the potential for TOD is not the same around every station. The station typology section lays out four types of intercity rail stations that identify the role the station plays in the national rail network. These types can help planners, advocates, and community members better understand both the types of development (residential versus office versus entertainment, etc.) that are most likely to locate near an intercity rail station and what the scale of that development might realistically be.

Understanding the local and regional market for development is also key. Intercity rail alone does not create a market for development. Even the neighborhoods around the busiest Grand Central Stations (e.g. Union Station in Washington, DC; Penn Station in New York City) require more than their passengers to help support the retail and entertainment components nearby. However, when proactive planning goes hand in hand with enhanced rail service and/or station revitalization efforts, there is an opportunity to focus market activity. In particular, stations made accessible and inviting can create a magnetic force for new development.

### CASE STUDY

#### MEMPHIS, TN: *Capturing the Demand for Downtown Housing*

Memphis falls into the Commuter station type. The Memphis Area Transit Authority (MATA) bought the Memphis Central Station in 1995 and made it the centerpiece of redevelopment in the neighborhood just south of the city's downtown business district.

Today, the station serves Amtrak's City of New Orleans route and is also a stop on the MATA trolley line. As a Commuter station, MATA relied on local transit connections and the downtown location to support redevelopment. The upper floors of the station were converted into moderately priced, market-rate loft apartments. There is a banquet/reception hall on the first floor of the station, and a farmer's market is held there on Saturdays. The station redevelopment was also a catalyst for nearby commercial and residential development.



PHOTO BY JOSEPH A.

### CASE STUDY

#### CONNELLSVILLE, PA: *Playing to Your Strengths*

A small town of around 7,600 people, Connellsville lies within the greater Pittsburgh metro region and is one access point for the Youghiogheny River Trail, a 43-mile crushed limestone trail that is favored by hikers and bikers and is part of the Great Allegheny Passage. As a Gateway station, it primarily serves trail users, tourists, and other occasional visitors with connections to Washington, DC; Pittsburgh; Cleveland; and Harpers Ferry, WV. Connellsville plans to capitalize on the synergy of having intercity connections and being a trail access point to create a vibrant downtown through main street design and planning. The city would like to encourage trail users to stay in town, shop, and eat, and is working with the Trail Town Program to develop a vision and implementation plan. Another town along the trail, Rockwood, has expressed interest in creating a new Amtrak station in their town in order to capitalize on the intercity connections and build up the potential for economic development. The rainbow gateway pictured indicates the beginning of the Great Allegheny Passage from Connellsville.



PHOTO BY SUNOJD. CYCLEWORKS

**To better anticipate the scale and type of development that may occur around an intercity rail station, the first step is to identify the role that intercity rail plays in the region and what the station's role is within the rail network. For instance:**

- When the rail service is used primarily by commuters on a daily basis in order to reach jobs a short distance away, stations may attract a mix of residential and retail development.
- When the rail line is used by business travelers or people taking longer, non-daily trips, the station may act more like a destination or a hub that will connect travelers from intercity rail to other local destinations. In this case, new development may be more commercial in nature.

**The market for development will also be impacted by where the station is located.**

- Stations located in the center of existing activity have more potential for new development.
- Stations located on the city or town's periphery are less likely to attract new development unless they are in extremely strong economic markets or receive significant public investment.

**Other factors that may impact development potential include:**

- The size of the town or city and its distance from other cities on the intercity rail network.
- The state of and connections to the local transit network and other transportation modes.
- The type of anticipatory planning and policy intervention that is in place; for example, whether the local land use plans and/or regional planning processes are supportive of integrating passenger rail and development.
- Whether the station is designed so that it creates an attractive environment for development.

## CASE STUDY



PHOTO BY CHRIS DE JARBET

### LINCOLN, NE: *Public Investment Spurs Station Area Redevelopment*

Lincoln's station fits under the Gateway station type, and development around the station has been driven by University activity, rather than the presence of the station alone. For many years, the western edge of Lincoln's downtown housed only rail yards and warehouses, serving both freight rail and Amtrak. However, in May 2010, voters approved a downtown revitalization project to turn the West Haymarket neighborhood into a new mixed-use neighborhood. The anchor for the development is a new sports arena for the University of Nebraska's women's and men's basketball teams, to be completed in fall 2013. The project also involves putting in new street grids to support new shops, restaurants, housing, offices, and a community plaza. The project requires some of the railroad tracks to be relocated and the city used the opportunity to move the current Amtrak station – a modest one-story facility – into the redevelopment area. The project is being financed by bonds issued by the West Haymarket Joint Public Agency, which was formed by the City of Lincoln and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The bonds will be repaid from sales tax revenue generated by the sports arena and nearby hotels. The project is projected to have a \$260 million annual impact on the Lincoln economy, and to generate 7,800 new jobs during construction and 1,200 permanent jobs after completion. Today, the West Haymarket area hosts a farmer's market with nearly 200 vendor stalls during peak weekends.

## 2. Get Centered: Connect and Strengthen Cores of Cities and Small Towns

### NEW INTERCITY RAIL STATIONS

Especially in high-speed rail corridors, stations should be placed in a central location whenever possible. One of the main advantages that rail can offer over auto and air travel, especially for intercity trips, is “front door” access to downtown business districts and major destinations, such as hospitals, entertainment centers and large employers. Stations at the periphery of a city or town lack this significant advantage over air travel, and both ridership and economic development may suffer as a result.

Of course, the operational needs of the rail system must also be considered. A downtown location can require trade-offs in terms of speed, access to maintenance facilities, and potential for future expansion of the rail infrastructure. For example, constructing two downtown stations in cities that are located close together may stimulate economic development in each city, while a single station serving both cities might lead to faster rail service. There may be compelling reasons to locate a station outside of a town center, such as to facilitate airport connections. In those cases, the evidence to date has shown those stations are far less likely to generate development and long-term economic returns. One of the ways to overcome this challenge is to tightly connect these stations with local transit, as has been done in Philadelphia, PA; Seattle, WA; and Boston, MA.

### CENTERING EXISTING STATIONS

Existing stations can also play a powerful role in revitalizing the center of a town or city. Most existing intercity rail stations come with a huge asset — a building or major structure that can be the centerpiece of downtown revitalization and historic preservation efforts. This booklet and the Great American Stations program ([www.greatamericanstations.com](http://www.greatamericanstations.com)) highlight many examples of towns and cities of all sizes that have renovated their station building and seen corresponding economic development in the surrounding area.

### CASE STUDY

#### BRUNSWICK, ME: *Capturing the Benefits of a Downtown Station*

Home to Bowdoin College and with a population of about 21,000, the town of Brunswick, ME, identified a weed-strewn five-acre vacant lot in the center of town as the perfect location for a new Amtrak station and used a public-private partnership to make this future station the hub of a vibrant, mixed-use development. The catalyst for the redevelopment effort was \$35 million in federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds to extend the Downeaster train service from Portland to Brunswick. But the town did not wait for the train service to start before beginning its work. The town seized the opportunity to redevelop a vacant but centrally located piece of land into a modern train station surrounded by mixed-use development that features retail and office space, an inn, a medical center, residential units, and a college bookstore. The train station will connect to local and intercity buses, taxis, and to the Maine Eastern Railroad, which takes tourists north to other coastal areas. Even before the new Downeaster service began, the Maine Street Station area had already become a focal point for economic development in Brunswick.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY



## NEW INTERCITY RAIL STATIONS

- Local communities should have a clear and defensible vision about where to locate stations.
- Entities providing funding should have clear guidelines about where stations should be placed.
- Federal and state governments and rail authorities should understand the relationship between station placement and ridership.
- Local land use and growth policies should support the station area as a center for the community.

## CENTERING EXISTING STATIONS

- Develop a vision identifying the station as a new center for business, entertainment, or public events.
- Support the station area as a center for the community with local land use and growth policies.
- Adopt strategies to strengthen these nodes as core destinations and points of departure, to support ridership and economic development.
- Implement strategies to increase activity including the programming of events and attracting new tenants to the area.
- Review zoning to allow for more flexibility in land uses and compact development to support community building.
- Make pedestrian and bicycle improvements to make it easier to walk or bike around the station.
- Consider changes to the transit network to make the station a hub of transportation activity.

**Resource: FRA Station Area Planning Guidebook.** FRA's Station Area Planning Guidebook highlights the importance of station location. The guidebook states: "Major passenger transport stations work best in existing regional centers. By virtue of their employment and residential densities, recognizable built environment, walkability, and connections to local transportation systems, existing regional centers provide a justifiable foundation for high-speed rail passenger stations."

## CASE STUDY

### The European Example

International examples also demonstrate that locating intercity stations in central locations has positive impacts on ridership and economic development. Yet even in Europe, where traveling by rail is a way of life, the existence of rail by itself is not enough: redevelopment around rail stations requires proactive planning and regional policies that support development, multimodal connections linking the station to the surrounding city, and stakeholder involvement and support.

In Lleida, Spain, (pop. 137,000) the city used its rail station to reconnect its older historic district with new neighborhoods to the north. The city built the rail station halfway between the two areas, focused on redevelopment around the station area, and provided seamless connections to both the older and newer districts with regional commuter rail service and local and regional buses. The rail station area now serves as an important link between two otherwise disconnected parts of the city.

Lille, France, (pop. 228,000) used its new high-speed rail station as the focal point for a major mixed-use center, with shopping, offices, hotels, housing, a conference center, and a public park. Lille, an older industrial city, capitalized on its new, faster connections to Paris, London, and Brussels to remake itself. Evidence from other cities in France demonstrates that high-speed rail service by itself is not enough to generate economic development, but Lille's proactive planning and station location (right at the edge of the historic town center) combined to attract new life into an underutilized area.



PHOTO BY: JIM DRUE

## 3. Develop a Vision Built on Consensus

**THE VISION FOR AN** intercity rail station can be a broad statement about what kind of place the community wants the area around the station to be in the future. Is it the hub of a major activity center in the region with 24-hour uses, or is it a more modest neighborhood center? Is it a mixed-use center, with pedestrian-friendly street design, or primarily residential? Is it the focal point for broader historic preservation and downtown revitalization efforts? Is it an entry point to the city as a whole, with seamless connections to local and regional destinations, or a sleepier station nestled into a smaller scale neighborhood? A strong vision will be more effective at communicating local needs and desires when working with agencies that may have competing objectives.

Visioning can also play a role in the practical issues that arise when planning for a new passenger rail station, improved rail service, or increased development around a station (i.e. concerns about noise and vibration). If not addressed, these can lead to community opposition. Engaging community members in the visioning process can educate them on the opportunities and

challenges of TOD, allow concerns to be aired and addressed early on, and set the groundwork to support future implementation.

For new stations in particular, a strong vision can ensure that decisions made later in the process (where rail tracks should go, how much short-term and long-term parking should be built, etc.) align with what the community wants. Without a strong vision for the station area, other factors, such as costs, can drive these decisions, resulting in infrastructure around stations that makes it more difficult to implement the community's desires in the long term.

Along California's proposed high-speed rail network, federal and state funds will pay for the major transportation elements of the network, but local governments and private interests will be the ones to build new development, improve the existing infrastructure, connect to the local transit network, and ensure that stations fit seamlessly into the existing environment. Without a clear vision, it may be more difficult for local governments to realize the kinds of economic benefits they want from stations.

### CASE STUDY

#### **NORMAL, IL: *Realizing a Vision***

Having a clear vision for the Uptown district meant Normal, IL, was ready to jump on an opportunity provided by federal stimulus funding in 2009. Since 2002, city staff and council members have been working to make the Normal Uptown district (the city's central business district) into a mixed-use, multimodal shopping and residential district. The Amtrak station that provides five daily trains to both Chicago and St. Louis is a central feature of the plan. When the recession hit and private development was stalled, Normal was poised to use the first round of stimulus funds to transform the station into a multimodal transportation hub with a new space for City Hall. Staff and political leaders in the city have worked steadily to support sustainability goals, installing bike parking in addition to auto parking, and working with highway officials to build a traffic circle that not only slows auto traffic but also creates an inviting and safe space for pedestrians. "The transportation center provided the key anchor for our Uptown redevelopment master plan," Mayor Chris Koos said. "Uptown station is something all Normal's citizens can admire and be proud of, an example of elegant design, sustainability and quality that will last for generations."



**The visioning process should engage a broad range of community members. Some of the elements that should be included:**

- A public entity may need to take the lead on creating a vision, but should go beyond the city staff and elected officials to incorporate a variety of voices.
- The visioning process should clearly demonstrate consensus and support for a common vision among local political officials, departments, agencies, community groups and business interests.
- A basic understanding and agreement on goals and responsibilities can support future collaboration.
- The process should emphasize long-term planning with near-term results and milestones.

**The vision itself may include a wide variety of elements or directions, but can include:**

- A clear statement of what the community wants stations and TOD planning to bring to them. (New development? Preserve the existing character? A combination of each? Etc.)
- Direction to create standards for new development, or broad statements about the type and scale of new investment, i.e., densities, building heights, setbacks, etc. For example, to create places that will be centers of activity and economic drivers, buildings should be oriented toward sidewalks.
- A broad sense of the timeline for implementation and the role of the public sector in funding catalytic projects.

## CASE STUDY

### DENVER, CO: A Grand Vision Yields Grand Results

The Mile High City knows what it takes to develop an ambitious vision for a station and see it through to implementation. Their vision, originally adopted in 2004 and since updated, is now being actively implemented. The Beaux Arts Denver Union Station, originally built in 1914, is transforming into a world-class multimodal facility with seamless intra- and intercity transportation connections, yet woven sensitively into an urban neighborhood. The \$484 million project includes a 22-bay regional bus facility, a new light rail station for current and future light rail lines, extension of the 16th Street Mall Shuttle and several public plazas to integrate transit services with adjacent neighborhoods. Construction represents the realization of a vision by regional partners that started in 2001 with the Regional Transportation District's (RTD) purchase of the station and its surrounding 19.5 acres. Partnering together on the project from the beginning, RTD, the City and County of Denver, the Colorado Department of Transportation and the Denver Regional Council of Governments jointly initiated the Denver Union Station Master Plan. Their vision, originally adopted in 2004 and since updated, is now being actively implemented:

*“Denver Union Station will be a multimodal transportation hub of international significance and a prominent and distinctive gateway to downtown Denver and the region.*

*Denver Union Station will bring critical elements of the public and private local, regional, statewide, and national transportation systems, both existing and future, together with private development and inspiring civic features.*

*Denver Union Station will create an exciting setting that will improve the connections between all transportation modes, respect the character and historical significance of the station and its adjacent neighborhoods, and provide a stimulating environment for public activity and economic vitality.”*



PHOTO BY: MATT JOHNSON



PHOTO BY: MATT JOHNSON

## 4. Make It Multimodal

**MULTIMODAL STATIONS** are those that can easily be accessed by walking, biking, local and regional transit, vanpools and shuttles, taxis, and private car. Ensuring that all of these are viable options is especially important for intercity rail stations because those stations serve a variety of people taking trips for many different reasons. Multimodality also supports higher ridership for the trains. Making intercity rail stations into local transit hubs increases the service area for the intercity rail and the ridership potential, while reducing the localized traffic and parking impacts.

### CASE STUDY



#### **SAN JOSE, CA: *Creating a Multimodal Transportation Hub***

San Jose's Diridon station serves as a local and regional transportation hub and a connection point to Amtrak trains. In part because of the strong local and regional transit connections the station already hosts, Diridon has also been identified as a stop on California's proposed high-speed rail line. San Jose is working to ensure that they capture the local benefits of this transportation hub by focusing attention on creating a model urban transportation hub within an exciting and livable downtown environment. Multimodality is a major component of the station area plan, which prioritizes pedestrian and bicycle circulation and transit as means of accessing and traveling through the station area.

The consequences of not making a station area multimodal are cumulative. When a station is surrounded by parking, its placemaking potential is diminished. Parking acts as a barrier for pedestrian access to stations, and the lots themselves take up precious real estate near the station that might otherwise be developed into active, tax-generating uses. FRA's TOD Guidebook points out that "3,000 surface parking spaces at 300 SF each in a one-quarter mile radius of the station constitute 16 percent of the total area; 10,000 spaces take over half of this precious real estate."

**Bikestation Washington DC** offers secure parking for more than 100 bicycles adjacent to the Washington, DC, Union Station. The facility also includes lockers and a private changing room, and provides bike rentals, sales, and repairs. Union Station is a major transportation hub in Washington, with connections to local, regional, and intercity buses, taxis, the Metrorail subway, commuter rail and Amtrak.



**To make a station multimodal:**

- Envision the intercity rail station as a transit hub. A seamless connection between intercity rail and local transit supports rail ridership.
- Meet peak demands for connections, especially in smaller communities. (For example: sports games, concerts and other events.)
- Use “Complete Street” and accessibility standards to design the streets in the area around the station and create street-facing station entrances so that it can serve those who want to walk, bike, take transit, taxis or car-share.
- Provide ample, safe and highly visible bike parking. With the recent surge in bicycling trips and facilities, it has become increasingly viable to take bicycles on intercity trains for touring destinations and making last-mile connections.
- Blocks surrounding stations should be scaled to pedestrian use, with complete sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities.
- Elements such as track alignment and station location should be designed with foot traffic access in mind, as well as transit and auto access.



TOP: The Fort Worth Intermodal Transportation Facility opened in 2002. In addition to intercity passenger service, the facility includes commuter rail service, an intercity bus depot, and local bus, trolley, and taxi service. LEFT: Signage for multimodal connections in Memphis, TN's historic Amtrak station.

## A NOTE ON The Parking Conundrum

**DETERMINING THE RIGHT** amount of parking, where it should go, and how it should be oriented to the station are important questions for intercity rail stations. The market for rail service will inform the amount of parking to provide. The high number of riders along the NEC and proposed high-speed rail service in California may require more parking than a typical Amtrak station today. However, those numbers should be tempered by the number of passengers who can take local transit to intercity stations. Stations at the core of walkable, transit-rich areas will need fewer parking spaces.

Surface versus structured parking will also be an important question

for stations. Where structured parking is the best choice, it should be built and sited in a way that does not reduce the overall TOD potential of the station area. When the market allows it, wrapping structured parking with active ground floor uses can support a more vibrant street life around stations. Surface parking can be a short-term solution for station areas with a weaker market for more intense development today. However, if surface parking is allocated near station areas, it should come with a clear plan for the longer-term redevelopment strategy for that land. Without such a strategy, these lots may be more difficult to transform down the road, and can inhibit TOD potential.

## 5. Make It Work for Everyone

**ALL OF THE STRATEGIES** outlined in this booklet for creating TOD around intercity rail stations can have significant benefits for lower-income people if equity is at the heart of the planning and implementation efforts. As centers of multimodal transportation options, these station areas will offer lower transportation costs for local trips, and lower-income households are more likely to use local transit options, helping support regional ridership objectives.

When the number of jobs and other destinations that can be easily and quickly accessed from a station increase with new passenger rail investments

(including higher speeds, greater reliability, new stations, enhanced connections, improved services, etc.), station areas have the potential to see dramatic change. If the neighborhoods around stations are already home to lower-income families, it is important to ensure the economic development around the stations does not displace current residents.

An equitable approach to implementing these strategies may include investing in affordable housing or housing preservation, but it may also mean ensuring that lower-skill workers have access to jobs created near intercity rail stations.

### CASE STUDY

#### **ALBUQUERQUE, NM: *Connecting Affordable Housing and Transportation***

The Alvarado Transportation Center has become a hub for affordable redevelopment in downtown Albuquerque. Amtrak's Southwest Chief line connects the city to Chicago and Los Angeles and many towns in between, and New Mexico's Rail Runner commuter service offers connections to Santa Fe, Bernalillo and south to Belen. The integration of these intercity rail services, along with the local Albuquerque Transit Department and Greyhound service, left a former terminal site empty. The city's redevelopment agency purchased the site and oversaw a competitive redevelopment process that resulted in the land being donated to a developer for the construction of 119 LEED-certified affordable rental units. The same developer is also constructing another 85,094 square feet of for-sale, market-rate residential units. Marketing for those units has emphasized their proximity to the transit hub.



## CASE STUDY

**Ensure that the visioning and planning for TOD around intercity rail includes:**

- An analysis of existing conditions that looks at the median income of residents, educational attainment, percent of renter households, and age of housing stock will identify potentially vulnerable neighborhoods.
- A review of the vision to ensure equity is integral and that minority and low-income residents and other stakeholders are at the table during the visioning process.
- Identification of priorities to ensure access for all, e.g., whether stakeholders should focus on preserving existing affordable housing, providing incentives for new affordable units, supporting existing local businesses, and/or improving access to transit through better street design and streetscape improvements.

**Tools to ensure station area development is accessible and affordable for everyone may include:**

- Housing preservation policies and strategies to minimize displacement.
- Setting affordable housing goals, tied into regional planning/goals.
- Regional planning that incorporates equity goals.

**HAVERHILL, MA: *Creative Reuse Builds Equity Near Intercity Connections***

With a population of 60,000, Haverhill lies near the border of New Hampshire and Massachusetts and has an Amtrak station served by 10 daily trips on the Downeaster. Haverhill's 39,000 riders annually make it a Gateway Station. Like many smaller towns in the Northeast, Haverhill has many old industrial and mill buildings around the station and downtown. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the city worked with federal and state preservation tax credits and state development incentives meant to promote transit-oriented "Smart Growth" projects to rehabilitate some of these buildings into market-rate and affordable housing units. The Cordovan at Haverhill Station is one example of a project that capitalized on the former mill's close proximity to downtown businesses and transportation options, including the MBTA commuter rail, Amtrak Downeaster and a local bus station. The project, developed by Beacon Communities Development, also involved MassHousing, the city of Haverhill, Department of Housing and Community Development, CharterMac LLC, the Massachusetts Historical Commission, and Bank of America. Some of this initial publicly subsidized construction has helped spark a growing residential district in downtown Haverhill, which has been accompanied by new shops, restaurants, and galleries that encourage visitors to explore the city.



PHOTO BY ELLEN PEMRICK

# Coordination Is Crucial

*Planning for intercity rail, transit, and TOD takes place at several jurisdictional levels.*

**FEDERAL LAW REQUIRES** states to prepare rail plans in order to receive high-speed and intercity passenger rail grant funds from FRA, and to prepare statewide highway and transit plans (known as Transportation Improvement Programs or STIPs) to receive funding from the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. In some states, these plans are consolidated into a single document, while in others they are developed as separate documents, and they may provide some guidance regarding TOD around rail projects. The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 calls for state rail plans to include an analysis of rail's impacts on economic development and land use.

At the regional scale, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) study the corridors being considered for road, bus and rail projects and prepare their own regional long-range transportation plans and transportation improvement programs (TIPs), which are then incorporated into state plans and the state STIP. The MPO's TIP will include details of the transportation project such as its specific route and cost and may acknowledge the importance of integrating the project with surrounding land uses.

The local level is where most planning for TOD occurs, and the integration of TOD and rail may take several forms. Cities or other local jurisdictions may identify areas for TOD in their Comprehensive Plan, or may develop a site-specific plan or zoning overlay that delineates the future of a particular station area.

With states having the responsibility for rail plans, regions focusing on roads and transit, and cities governing land use, planning for the successful integration of intercity rail, transit, and TOD requires proactive coordination among states, regions, and local governments. A comprehensive planning law, like California's SB375, can help to coordinate these potentially disparate planning efforts.

## CASE STUDY

### **Philadelphia, PA: 30th Street Station Area Benefits from State and Local Redevelopment Incentives**

The 30th Street Station in Philadelphia, PA, is the third busiest station in Amtrak's national network, with 120 Amtrak trains, 960 SEPTA commuter trains, and 26 NJ Transit commuter trains each weekday, not to mention the buses, trolleys, and subways that also serve the station. The station is on the west side of the Schuylkill River across from the center of Philadelphia, near two major universities but with little adjacent development. The State named the area a Keystone Opportunity Improvement Zone, which provides state and local tax incentives for developers and businesses that locate near the station. In 2006, a major office tower opened with a direct pedestrian bridge to the 30th Street Station. Now the University of Pennsylvania is developing a site south of the station into several mixed-use high-rises that will include office and retail space, hotel rooms, and condos. The IRS, which has located offices in the renovated post office across from the station, will serve as an anchor for the project.





# RESOURCE: Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

**CREATING CONSENSUS** around what stakeholders envision for the future of neighborhoods around intercity rail stations is crucial toward implementing that vision down the road. Every stakeholder, from the federal government down to the business owner or resident living near the station, has a different role to play in implementing TOD near intercity rail.

STAKEHOLDERS	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Federal Government	Set broad policies and policy recommendations and create educational tools. Provide funding.
Amtrak	Work with local partners to ensure operations side of rail are integrated into land use planning and implementation.
State Governments	Funding, planning (state rail plans and transportation improvement programs); may also set priorities for station development.
Railroad Owners	Often major landowners around stations and have some control over design of the station area (track alignment, etc.)
Regional Agencies (MPOs, COGs)	Integrate intercity rail into regional planning, focusing growth around nodes, revising transit networks where necessary.
City Planners and Engineers	Incorporate local plans into zoning and long-range planning alike.
Advocates	Continue to be a voice for the “tough” decisions and equitable outcomes.
Transit Agencies	Reconfigure existing local transit to connect to intercity rail stations. Where appropriate, use station as a hub for local transit.
City Leaders	Hold the vision and push for continued momentum on planning and catalytic projects.
Public and Nonprofit Entities (community based organizations, universities, etc.)	Work with local government and the private sector to articulate the needs of the community. As landowners or major destinations, ensure new development fits into overall vision.
Business Leaders and Developers	Represent private market and work with local government and advocates to create proposals that fit vision.

## CASE STUDY

### NORTH CAROLINA: *The State Takes the Lead*

Since the early 1990s, the Rail Division of North Carolina’s DOT has worked to boost rail service in the state, and working with local governments to revitalize historic stations has been one key component to that work. The focus of these projects was on the renovation of station buildings. NC DOT quickly realized that not only do the stations provide an important transportation function, but that as entry points to downtown and activity centers, station revitalization projects have the potential to support local economic growth. NC DOT completed a study examining the impacts beyond construction, including activities accommodated at stations, land use changes, tourism, and fiscal impacts and found that in all cases the station renovations have a substantial positive impact on both large urban and small town communities. NC DOT also found that the station restoration projects are a source of civic pride for local communities, prompting downtown redevelopment plans or other forms of renewed enthusiasm for their towns.

More and more local governments in North Carolina are realizing the benefits of intercity rail. Today communities without rail stations are asking for them and others are developing district-scale TOD planning—looking beyond the station building itself. Lexington, NC, has used occasional Amtrak service, arranging for a temporary stop for the town’s annual BBQ festival, but locals pushed for a new, permanent station with fixed service. With a 2010 TIGER II planning grant, the city is developing a plan to identify how an abandoned manufacturing facility may be reused for a station building and will create a master plan for the Lexington Depot District to create a vibrant destination and center.

## CASE STUDY

### **FRESNO, CA: *Planning Ahead for High-Speed Rail***

About 200 miles north of Los Angeles in the Central Valley, Fresno is the fifth largest city in California today and a major stop on the planned California High-Speed Rail (CAHSR). Downtown Fresno lost its predominance as the shopping and business district in the region after WWII but, with the CAHSR project, Fresno sees a clear opportunity to capitalize on pedestrian activity at the station as well as the regional economic opportunity presented by the intercity connectivity. A station area master plan will guide efforts for the Fresno station. In addition to promoting arts, cultural diversity, and entertainment, the city plans to “foster high-quality, mixed-use, dense urban development in Downtown Fresno – including employment concentrations, housing, commercial and office uses, and public space – and encourage a lively mix of daytime and nighttime activities.” The city will consider innovative strategies like value capture and parking management.

## Resource: Federal Tools for Multimodality

**MANY FEDERAL PROGRAMS** exist to assist local communities to implement some of the strategies outlined in this booklet. Most of those programs were created or retained in the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), which was signed into law by President Obama on July 6, 2012.

- Communities can use a portion of federal highway funds (the Transportation Alternatives Program) to improve pedestrian and bicycle access and safety in station areas. These funds can also be used to renovate historic train stations.
- MAP-21 includes a new competitive program to fund large-scale highway and transit projects, known as the Projects of National and Regional Significance Program. In addition, the TIGER program funds a variety of innovative transportation projects. The amount of funding available for these competitive, multimodal programs will be determined annually.
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) formula funds, distributed annually to transit agencies across the country, can be used not only to build and maintain bus and rail systems, but to undertake projects to provide connectivity to a transit facility, create multimodal centers, and make station area improvements.
- Federal highway funds under the Surface Transportation Program (STP), the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program, the National Highway Performance Program (NHPP), and the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) can be used for a variety of transit, bicycle, and pedestrian projects.
- FTA’s New Starts program funds the design and construction of new transit projects, including designing their connections with other modes.
- FTA’s Bus and Bus Facilities grants for multimodal centers and station area improvements are another source of funding that Amtrak-served communities have had great success in obtaining. Under MAP-21, these grants will be distributed to communities across the country according to a formula.
- FRA offers a variety of programs to support rail-related infrastructure, including the High-Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail Program, the Rail Line Relocation Program, and the Railroad Rehabilitation and Investment Financing Program (RRIF). Other than the RRIF, the amount of funding available for these programs is determined annually.
- The popular Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) grew significantly under MAP-21 to support more low-cost federal loans for construction of highway and transit projects.

### **MORE RESOURCES:**

FHWA website: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/>

FTA website: <http://www.fta.dot.gov/map21/index.html>

FRA website: <http://www.fra.dot.gov>

EPA: A Guide to Sustainable Transportation Performance Measures: [http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/transpo\\_performance.htm](http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/transpo_performance.htm)

FHWA Bicycle and Pedestrian Program: [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/index.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/index.cfm)

FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures: <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/provencountermeasures>

FTA Bicycles and Transit: [http://www.fta.dot.gov/13747\\_14399.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/13747_14399.html)

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. <b>PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.</b>					
1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 05/06/2013		2. REPORT TYPE Best Practices Guidebook		3. DATES COVERED (From - To) Ongoing	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Intercity Rail and Transit-Oriented Development: Making Connections, Building Communities				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Kline, Sarah Wampler, Elizabeth Yake, Chris				5d. PROJECT NUMBER CA-26-1007-05	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Reconnecting America and the Center for Transit-Oriented Development 1707 L Street NW, Suite 210 Washington, DC 20036				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER TOD 206	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Federal Transit Administration US Department of Transportation 1200 new Jersey Avenue, SE Washington, DC 20590 [www.fta.dot.gov/research]				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S) FTA	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Available online [http://www.ctod.org]					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES FTA Contact: Office of Planning and Environment, FTA, 202-366-4033 or www.fta.dot.gov					
14. ABSTRACT This booklet lays out the case for why cities and towns should think of their intercity rail stations as a resource and a focal point for land use. It identifies some of the different steps they can take to create transit-oriented development (TOD) around their intercity rail stations.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Intercity Rail Transit-Oriented Development Best Practices					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code)
Unclassified	Unclassified	Unclassified	UU	28	



FEDERAL TRANSIT  
ADMINISTRATION



*A Partnership of:*

