Capitol Region Council of Governments

Building Corridors of Opportunity:
Best Practices for Engaging Anchor Institutions and Neighborhoods

Recommendations

December 1, 2016
Acknowledgements

Building Corridors of Opportunity: Best Practices for Engaging Anchor Institutions and Neighborhoods, Recommendations was prepared with financial support from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. The report was prepared for the Capitol Region Council of Governments by the consulting firm of HR&A Advisors, Inc.
Based on national best practices research, the following strategies can support CRCOG and its partners to advance TOD vision along the CTfastrak corridor and create an ongoing, mutually-beneficial partnership among anchors, government, and communities.
Recommendations – Vision: A working group could be formed, comprised of key anchors, including State and local government, medical institutions, universities, and foundations, to identify shared goals and define a vision for TOD.

- Define a unified vision for the transit corridor and/or place-based visions for segments, building off past plans and current studies
- Engage anchors through individual or small group conversations to elicit more open, creative dialogue
- Identify development goals that would mutually benefit anchor institutions, community organizations, and municipalities
- Create unique station-area plans that connect TOD with the needs of nearby anchors and communities
- Articulate a brand or identity for TOD along the CTfastrak corridor that can be reflected in marketing materials targeted to unique audiences
Recommendations – Partnerships: Based on the shared vision, a partnership would formalize roles and responsibilities for advancing the vision among anchors and interested stakeholders.

- Identify and engage executive level decision-makers from key anchors, government, communities, as well as neutral stakeholders, such as foundations and local development corporations.
- Create a consensus-based partnership structure, and identify a leadership strategy for the partnership.
- Determine roles and responsibilities among participating entities.
- Tie into existing planning efforts, such as the recently-announced Innovation Places Program in New Britain.
**Recommendations – Partnerships:** The geographic focus of the TOD effort should inform the list of potential partners.

- **A corridor-wide development strategy should engage key anchors and partners such as:**

  - CT Department of Transportation
  - CT Office of Policy and Management
  - CT Department of Economic and Community Development
  - CT Housing Finance Authority
  - City of Hartford
  - City of New Britain
  - Town of West Hartford
  - Town of Newington
  - Capital Region Development Authority
  - Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association
  - Frog Hollow Neighborhood Revitalization Zone
  - Hartford 2000
  - CT Trust for Historic Preservation
  - Hartford Preservation Alliance
  - Parkville Revitalization Association
  - West End Civic Association
  - Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance
  - Hospital of Central Connecticut
  - Connecticut Children’s Medical Center
  - Hartford Hospital
  - St. Francis Hospital
  - Central Connecticut State University
  - Goodwin College
  - Trinity College
  - University of Connecticut
  - University of Hartford
  - University of St. Joseph
  - Legrand North America
  - Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts
  - New Britain Museum of American Art
  - Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art
  - Elmwood Business Association
  - New Britain Chamber of Commerce
  - YWCA New Britain
  - Coalition for New Britain’s Youth
  - Local Initiatives Support Corporation
  - Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
  - Mutual Housing Association of Greater Hartford
  - Northside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance

*Building Corridors of Opportunity, Recommendations*
Recommendations – Partnerships: The geographic focus of the TOD effort should inform the list of potential partners.

- A station-level development strategy for Sigourney Street, as an example, should engage key anchors and partners such as:
  - City of Hartford
  - Capital Region Development Authority
  - CT Department of Transportation
  - CT Office of Policy and Management
  - CT Department of Economic and Community Development
  - Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
  - Connecticut LISC
  - University of Connecticut
  - Hartford Hospital
  - Aetna
  - Phoenix Companies
  - Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts
**Recommendations – Development Entity:** The Partnership should identify entities with the capacity and ability to lead real estate development as well as channel public and private financing.

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- Identify an existing organization or create a new entity that can guide real estate development
- Confirm that the entity has the capacity to strategically align private and public financing to carry out the TOD vision
- Define opportunities for the entity to take on a more formalized role in municipal and regional planning efforts
**Recommendations – Community Involvement**: The Partnership should identify and actively engage key community-based organizations to become meaningful members of the development effort.

- Engage community stakeholders and organizations in TOD visioning, planning and implementation
- Include nonprofit organizations that have historical ties to neighborhoods surrounding station areas in the formal partnership
- Connect to community based organizations, such as Hartford NRZ’s, and local businesses
- Develop a structure that allows for meaningful and regular participation and feedback
**Recommendations – Public Investment:** Working with its government partners, the Partnership should identify specific public sector interventions, either in the form of direct development, infrastructure improvements, or financing strategies.

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<td>• Identify opportunities for direct public subsidies and investment, such as the potential relocation of large government offices to appropriate CTfastrak station areas</td>
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<td>• Align public realm improvements and other infrastructure investments with future development sites</td>
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<td>• Explore public financing strategies such as TIFs and PILOTs that help attract private development and large employers</td>
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