

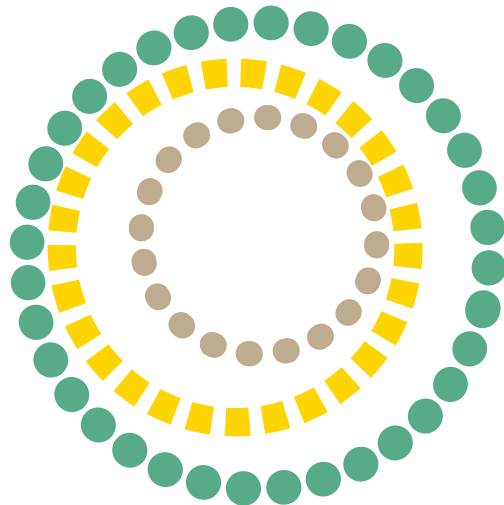


Strategies for Equitable TOD

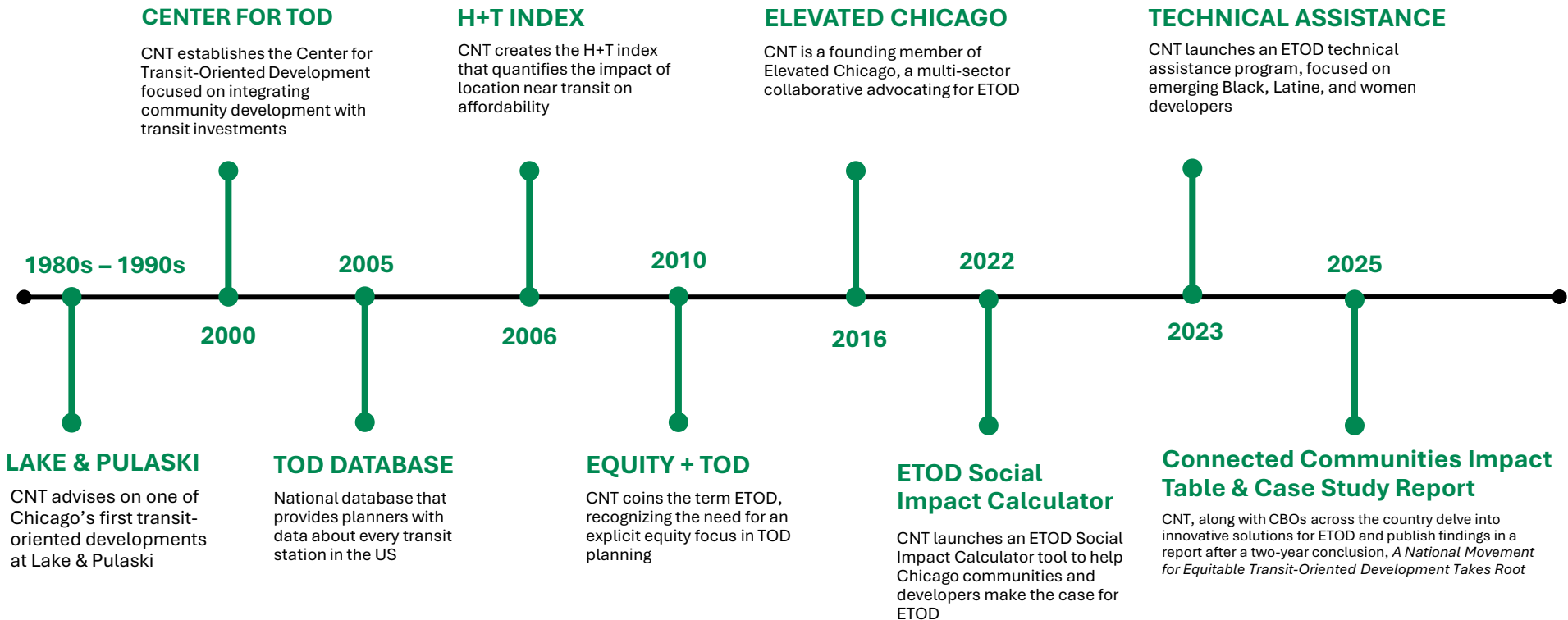
TOD on a Roll: Making the Most of New Transit Connections
Puget Sound Regional Council
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**We are an urban
planning nonprofit with
a specific focus on
equity and
sustainability.**



OUR EXPERTISE: ETOD



Traditional TOD: Good Intentions, Unintended Outcomes

Definition

Dense, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development near transit to lessen dependence on owning and driving cars to get to the places people need to go.

Coined in the late 1980s by Congress for the New Urbanism co-founder Peter Calthorpe

Intentions

- Increase transit ridership
- Connect people to each other, jobs, and more opportunities
- Improve public health and reduce urban GHGs.

Outcomes

Traditional TOD **planned for sustainability but left out social equity** leading to:

- Physical Displacement from disinvestment in some neighborhoods and gentrification in others
- Cultural Displacement from loss of cultural identity and sense of belonging
- Community Developers building affordable housing and community spaces were outbid by outside developers building luxury housing (early 2000s in Chicago)

“

ETOD is transit-oriented development with an emphasis on equity. How is this providing access to people who are moderate and low incomes, how is this providing an opportunity for entrepreneurs to have access to affordable properties to have their business. It is an opportunity for people to be able to visit local development because of transit access. In short, Transit-Oriented Development that is focused on Equity.

— Jacky Grimshaw, Senior Director, CNT



ETOD is TOD with equity first.

Counters systemic racism

ETOD acknowledges that TOD policies need to be implemented with specific actions to counter systemic racism.

Community-led

Practices are developed in partnership with communities, following their lead so that the economic benefits of development can be accrued to the long-term community members in all kinds of real estate markets.

Practice over Terminology

The term “ETOD” can be a barrier because it is practitioner jargon. Communities, local businesses, and partners can embody ETOD without identifying with the term.

Implementing ETOD in Four Ways

What

Types of development

Can include a mix of services, skills-building, and cultural opportunities:

- Affordable housing (existing and new)
- Thriving small businesses
- Community amenities
- Art and gathering spaces

Where

Location of development

- Walking distance to transit, including high-frequency service
- First/Last mile connections are complete and well-maintained
- Developers understand community context and displacement pressures. They are intentional about orienting people to services, amenities, and each other.

How

Community-led

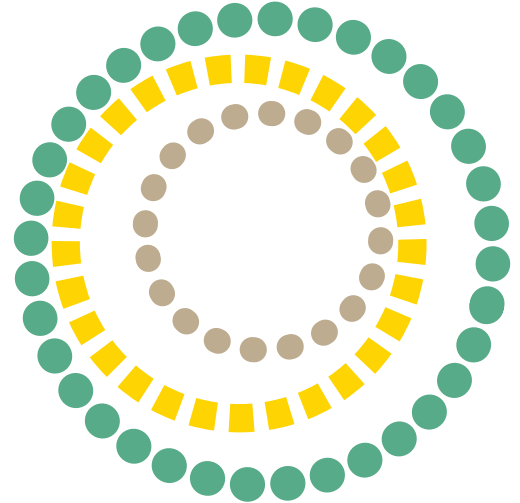
- Community is defined by shared interests, location, or history
- Community members have decision-making power and ownership in design, plan, and implementation
- They feel a sense of connection and empowerment in what is built

When

Short- & long-term outcomes

- **Short-term:** job creation for ETOD sites, space for small businesses (existing and new), community cohesion, and addressing priorities for climate, food access, safety, etc.
- **Long-term:** lower transportation costs, more transportation options, housing affordability models, cultural retention, redress other inequities in built environment

ETOD In Practice



Austin, TX



Austin Wins Funding and Policy Support

Challenge

30 years of rapid growth, unevenly distributed across racial and ethnic groups, leading to displacement and gentrification, an affordable housing crisis and worsening traffic congestion.

Two failed attempts to fund TOD in 2000 and 2014

Urban core supported efforts, but suburban voters were concerned about tax increases and cost to expand rail.

Mismatch in local and state policies

State bars affordability requirements; land development codes differ, and funding and jurisdiction disputes between leaders and lawmakers are ongoing.

A Recalibration of TOD to ETOD

After the 2014 failed vote, transit advocates and decision-makers shifted to focus on community voices and addressing systemic inequities within the city as part of a holistic approach to transit.

Austin, TX



What changed from 2014 – 2020 to Pass Project Connect?

Project Connect Makes a Paradigm Shift in 2020

Project Connect (Prop A) introduced a comprehensive transit plan guided by ETOD to develop a multi-billion dollar expansion of CapMetro rail and bus service. Following Prop A, City Council adopted an ETOD Policy Plan.

Community engagement led by underrepresented groups

Communities named challenges in rising rents, small business preservation, and dissatisfaction with existing transit service. Underrepresented groups led engagement and shaped Project Connect and Austin's ETOD Policy.

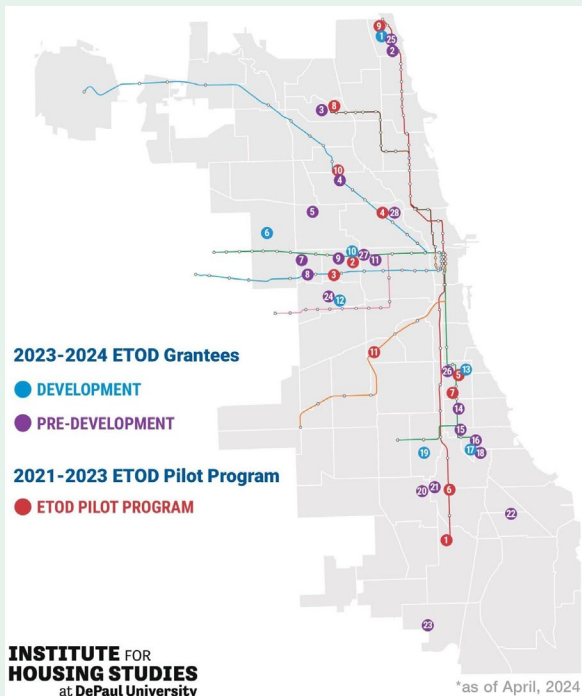
Collaborative Partnerships

CapMetro, the City of Austin, and the Austin Transit Partnership (ATP) coordinate Project Connect, with the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) advising on equity and anti-displacement matters.

Innovative Funding

Funded by property tax revenue (no expiration) and FTA TOD Pilot program grant to support two light-rail lines and TOD projects for 21 stations.

Chicago, IL



Community-based Developer TA Expands ETOD across Chicago

Background

Elevated Works was a 2-year (2023-2025) City of Chicago-backed technical assistance (TA) initiative created to help community-driven development ETOD projects overcome technical and financial barriers that delay or derail progress.

Program & Grantees

- 13 technical assistance partners provided \$1.25 million in coaching to grantees on zoning, capital readiness, climate resiliency, community engagement, market analysis, public art, transportation and more.
- \$5 million in grants awarded to grantees by the City of Chicago
- 26 projects citywide with most led by first-time and small-scale developers who were majority Black, Latine, and women-led
- Project types: affordable housing, grocery stores, early childhood education centers, and other essential neighborhood assets.

Impact

“Chicago’s experience shows that when cities invest not just in projects, but in the people building them, community-serving development can scale faster, more efficiently, and with lasting impact.” – Elevated Chicago

Atlanta, GA



Soccer Station, Atlanta, GA | Photo by TransFormation Alliance

Advocates Lead the Way to ETOD

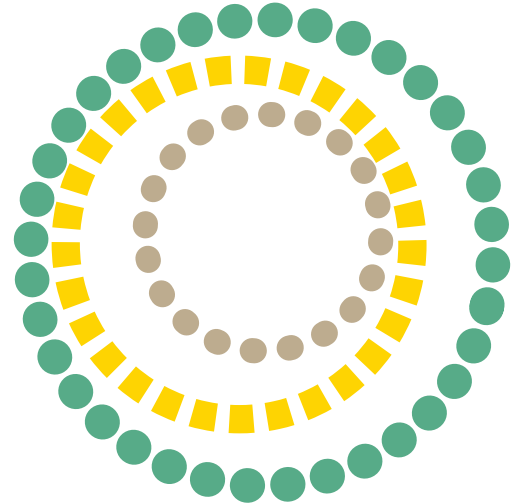
MARTA's TOD

MARTA launched a TOD department in 2013. Although they don't explicitly name "E" TOD, they have made significant investments in partnership with other city departments. They acknowledge that TOD is at the intersection of public transportation and community building.

Transit Advocates are central to promoting ETOD

- The **TransFormation Alliance** focuses on anti-displacement within ETOD by fostering connections between Atlanta's Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation, and MARTA.
- **Propel ATL** a transit advocacy coalition, connects residents with decision-makers and advocates for infrastructure improvements based on community needs. They have been instrumental in zoning reform to support developer affordability and implementing safe streets policies, which contribute to a larger ETOD portfolio.
- **Soccer in the Streets** created StationSoccer to turn vacant lots near transit into mini soccer fields to build community space in and around transit hubs. Programs address community needs on and off the field

Advancing ETOD for Public Decision- Makers and Developers



Recommendations for Advancing ETOD

Public Decision Makers

Municipal leaders and MPOs should ensure equity is integrated into project planning and implementation processes:

1. Understand historical context of affected community before proposing infrastructure projects.
2. Avoid assumptions about service needs on behalf of community.
3. Consider potential impacts on the community, address negative impacts and inequities. The final project should benefit those most impacted.
4. Involve community members early and often.

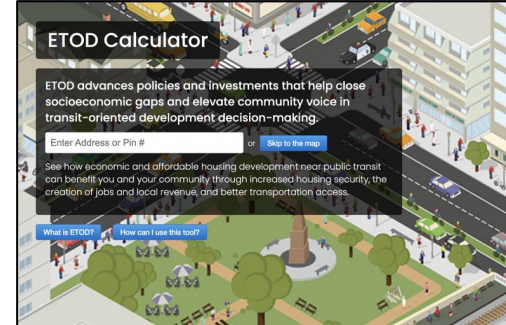
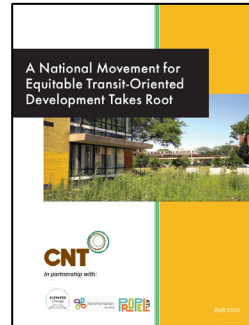
Developers

Developers should ensure projects:

1. Go beyond surface-level assessment and addresses gaps in transit access, affordability, health, and climate change.
2. Consider the full transportation experience for including first/last mile journey, transportation services and options, and accessibility for diverse mobility needs.
3. Are feasible, realistic, and transparent throughout the development journey and set clear expectations with the community.



Thank You!



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