What are Equitable Transit Communities?

Equitable transit communities are transit-served neighborhoods that provide housing and transportation choices, a mix of services, amenities and businesses, and greater social and economic opportunity for current and future residents.

Successful communities are created through inclusive planning and decision-making, resulting in development that accommodates future residents and jobs, increases opportunity for existing communities, and enhances public health.

How Can the Region Create Equitable Transit Communities?

Three Program Goals:

1. Attract more of the region’s housing and job growth near high-capacity transit.
2. Provide affordable housing near transit.
3. Increase access to opportunity for existing and future members of transit communities.

What We’ve Accomplished

The Growing Transit Communities Partnership created the Growing Transit Communities Strategy, an action framework for partners across the region. The Strategy builds on the many products of the Growing Transit Communities work program, including:

Corridor-Based Planning

- Growing Transit Communities Compact, with numeric goals for growth and affordability in the region’s transit station areas, and an ongoing commitment to collaboration and action.
- Toolkit of Recommended Strategies and Actions with a range of overarching regional approaches to local and individual actions, providing a set of coordinated steps.
- People + Place Implementation Typology to link strategies and investments to transit communities based on current needs and opportunities.
- Comprehensive Existing Conditions Report and Transit-Oriented Development Market Study for 74 transit communities across the region.

A Regional Equity Network

- Cross-sector stakeholder body — the Equity Network — to provide a forum and expertise on equitable development principles and strategies.
- Comprehensive regional Opportunity Mapping: “Equity, Opportunity, and Sustainability in the Central Puget Sound Region.”
- $4 Capacity-Building Grants totaling $450,000 to 43 community-based organizations to support engagement, outreach, organizing, and research.
- Two-day Puget Sound Equity Summit that brought together over 400 community members, activists, and representatives of the public and private sector.

Affordable Housing Tools

- White paper and business plan for a Regional Equitable Development Initiative (REDI) fund to encourage affordable housing preservation and production near transit.
- Regional Fair Housing Equity Assessment to identify barriers to fair housing choice across the central Puget Sound region, and regional strategies to address them.
- White paper and draft legislation on an Equitable Value-Capture Financing Tool to fund local infrastructure investments to support growth and affordable housing.
- Inventory of Publicly Owned Lands in transit communities and recommendations for use of surplus lands.
- Regional Subsidized Housing Database mapping all publicly-supported and owned housing units in the region.

Innovative Demonstration Projects

- Area-wide Environmental Impact Statement and Subarea Plan for Tacoma’s South Downtown neighborhood.
- Urban Design Framework and Healthy Transit Communities Principles for Seattle’s Northgate station area and urban center.
- Best Practices and Implementation Support for East Link station areas in Bellevue and Redmond, taking the next steps to implement station area plans.
Three-Part Framework for Action

The Growing Transit Communities Strategy includes three steps to promote thriving and equitable transit communities in the central Puget Sound region. The Regional Compact affirms the support of a variety of partners from throughout the region for the Partnership’s work and a commitment to work toward regional goals by implementing the Strategy. The Toolkit of Strategies and Actions and the People + Place Implementation Typology include 24 recommended strategies, eight implementation approaches, and corridor specific priorities that will guide an evolving approach to transit communities. Individual Work Plans are local government, agency, or organization specific work plans which define short- and medium-term actions that can implement the Strategy.

A Toolkit of TWENTY-FOUR Strategies

The Toolkit presents 24 strategies with 228 specific actions for agencies, local governments, and other regional partners. As a whole, the Toolkit is a call to action for partners across the region to intensify efforts to create great urban places and build equitable communities around transit.

Implementation

Eight Implementation Approaches

There is no one-size-fits-all approach for the strategies that will help a transit community thrive and grow. The People + Place Implementation Typology is a regional framework for local action with eight unique approaches that identify appropriate implementation strategies.

Big Tent of Partners

It will take collaboration among a wide spectrum of public, private, and nonprofit agencies and organizations working together to promote thriving and equitable transit communities. Signing on to the Growing Transit Communities Compact demonstrates a commitment to working collaboratively toward common goals for the region’s transit station areas. By working together, the central Puget Sound region can achieve its vision for a sustainable future that advances our people, our prosperity, and our planet.

1. Establish a regional program to support thriving and equitable transit communities.
2. Build partnerships and promote collaboration.
3. Engage effectively with community stakeholders.
4. Build capacity for community engagement.
5. Evaluate and monitor impacts and outcomes.
6. Conduct station area planning.
7. Use land efficiently in transit communities.
8. Locate, design, and provide access to transit stations to support TOD.
9. Adopt innovative parking tools.
10. Invest in infrastructure and public realm improvements.
12. Minimize displacement through affordable housing preservation and replacement.
13. Increase housing resources to support transit-dependent populations.
15. Expand value capture financing as a tool for infrastructure and affordable housing.
17. Leverage market value through incentives for affordability.
18. Implement recommendations of regional fair housing assessment.
19. Assess community needs.
20. Invest in environmental and public health.
21. Invest in economic vitality and opportunity.
22. Invest in equitable mobility options.
23. Invest in accessible high quality education.