

# REVITALIZING URBAN TRANSIT CORRIDORS

## Strategic Thinking about Corridor Development

### RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE URBAN CORRIDORS TASK FORCE

#### BOLD MEASURES FOR A BOLD VISION

##### Strategies to Achieve the Thurston Region's Urban Vision

Creating the kind of dynamic urban centers called for in local and regional plans is difficult, especially when that entails the retrofit of old highway arterials into people-oriented places. But changes are necessary if this region is to accommodate the needs of a population that is undergoing a significant change in demographics. Fortunately,

new ways of planning, developing and investing are available to help this community achieve its objectives.

Regional policy makers recommend a suite of measures to help jurisdictions transform this region's premier transit corridor, and to shape its form and location in priority districts. The recommended measures will not be easy or quick. Their success will take education, public support, and new partnerships.

The two most important new elements in this suite of measures are the formation of a Corridor

Development Partnership, and the designation of development areas referred to as "Corridor Districts."

The Corridor Partnership is a new way for local jurisdictions to work together in transforming the Martin Way/4<sup>th</sup> Avenue / State Avenue/Capitol Way/Capitol Boulevard corridor, focusing innovative strategies towards the

new Corridor Districts wherever feasible. Both measures, as well as the other Task Force

recommendations, are discussed in the companion report.

The time to act is now. The current economy provides a window of opportunity for jurisdictions to reassess their approaches toward community development and to implement these measures for realizing the goal of truly urban, walkable, people-oriented places to complement other lifestyle choices in the Thurston region.

**GOVERNMENT MUST BE A MORE EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PARTNER IF THIS REGION'S URBAN VISION IS TO BE REALIZED.**

#### ACHIEVING OUR URBAN VISION

Adopted land use and transportation plans envision the emergence of dynamic urban centers offering an array of "car-lite" lifestyle choices not currently available in Thurston County. This is an ambitious goal for a region our size.

Achieving this takes more than vision and regulations. It takes proactive, strategic measures on the part of local governments, and new public/private partnerships. It requires new ways of thinking about the value of urban investments and development, and that takes political leadership and courage. It will take bold measures to make our urban vision real.

## SUMMARY OF MEASURES TO ACHIEVE URBAN VISION

### Modest Measures

1. Property Inventory
  - a. Vacant commercial property statistics
  - b. Publicly-owned property statistics
2. Community Development 101
  - a. Public outreach effort
  - b. Engage development community
3. Land Use Analysis
  - a. Land-to-building value analysis
  - b. Economic capacity to support neighborhood business districts
4. ID Priority Investment Districts
5. Select Priority Districts for Further Focus

### Moderate Measures

6. Strategic Investment Strategy
  - a. Critical infrastructure
  - b. Place-making needs
7. Refine Regulatory Tools
  - a. Form-based code
  - b. Planned action EIS
  - c. Streamline development process in corridor districts
8. Refine Impact Fee Strategy
  - a. Unincorporated area fees
  - b. Location-efficiency differentiation in fees
  - c. Dwelling unit size differentiation
9. Land Acquisition Strategy
  - a. Public land swap strategy
  - b. Land aggregation strategy
10. Urban Growth Boundaries
  - a. Evaluate role of short- & long-term boundaries

### Mighty Measures

10. Pursue Legislative Agenda
  - a. Identify and address regulatory barriers
11. Community Lending Pool
  - a. Establish locally-determined pool with local lenders
12. Corridor Development Partnership
  - a. Create multi-jurisdictional, partnership to engage in proactive corridor development activities and explore potential public/private partnership opportunities

This work was conducted by the Urban Corridors Task Force. The Task Force was a joint subcommittee of the Thurston Regional Planning Council and its Transportation Policy Board. Its mission was to establish an objective understanding of background conditions along the region's key urban corridors, identify and understand barriers to achieving adopted land use visions, and make recommendations for how to address those barriers. Task Force members looked at the relationship between transportation and land use in these corridors, and worked to understand the market factors that influence the viability of infill and redevelopment projects in this region. This phase of their work concluded in November 2011.

### Urban Corridors Task Force

City of Lacey	Virgil Clarkson, Andy Ryder
City of Olympia	Stephen Buxbaum, Doug Mah
City of Tumwater	Pete Kmet (Chair)
Thurston County	Sandra Romero (Vice-Chair)
Intercity Transit	Ed Hildreth
North Thurston Public Schools	Mike Laverty, Chuck Namit
TPB Citizen Representatives	Mike Beehler, Jackie Barrett-Sharar
TPB Business Representatives	Doug DeForest, Renée Sunde

For detail on the recommended measures, see <http://www.trpc.org/regionalplanning/landuse/pages/uctf.aspx>  
 Contact Thera Black for more information or to schedule a briefing – 360.956.7575 / [blackvt@trpc.org](mailto:blackvt@trpc.org)