

DRAFT LAND USE, HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES FOR THE GREEN LINE TRANSIT ORIENTED DISTRICT STUDY

I. INTRODUCTION

In early 1998, the Department of Regional Planning embarked on a program to develop and implement Transit Oriented Districts surrounding two Green Line Stations in the unincorporated communities of West Athens and Lennox. The project areas include all land within approximately one-quarter mile of the Vermont Avenue and Hawthorne Boulevard Green Line stations.

Transit Oriented Districts (T.O.D.s) are plans which encourage transit and pedestrian supportive development which include mixed uses, pedestrian orientated design standards, and improved pedestrian access to transit facilities. The goals of the Green Line T.O.D. program are first to achieve an overall reduction in congestion through increased rail and transit ridership and decreased dependence on the automobile; and second, to revitalize the neighborhoods around the transit stations.

The first product of the T.O.D. program is the Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development Strategy Report. This report was developed in conjunction with the Green Line T.O.D. Advisory Committee. Committee members were representative of the West Athens and Lennox communities. These representatives live, work, and/or are affiliated with community serving organizations in these neighborhoods. Staff and the Committee worked together at several meetings for almost a year formulating land use and economic development strategies for the two station areas. In addition, the report includes an overall vision, goals and objectives for the future improvement of the station areas. A broad range of development issues are also addressed.

The Land Use and Economic Development Strategy Report forms both the theoretical and concrete basis for the implementation of the T.O.D. program. The specific implementation tools are the Green Line T.O.D. Ordinance and the Zoning maps that accompany the Ordinance. The Green Line T.O.D. Ordinance and related maps translate the strategies in the Strategy Report into specific and detailed zoning laws that will guide development in the T.O.D. areas.

The Zoning Ordinance revisions constitute the first step in the implementation of the Green Line strategies. While the strategy statements will also include additional long-term regulatory objectives and incentives, it must be stressed that many of these strategies will require the voluntary cooperation of numerous public and private participants over the long term. This Strategy Report is offered within this context of short-term adoption of specific zoning provisions which will be implemented by the

Department of Regional Planning, and other longer term regulatory proposals which may be implemented on a voluntary basis by the broad range of other public and private participants cited in the strategies.

II. VISION STATEMENT

The recent construction of the Green Line Light Rail System and its Vermont Avenue and Hawthorne Boulevard stations have provided the West Athens and Lennox communities with unique opportunities to help revitalize local neighborhoods, and to generate increased transit ridership. Toward these goals, the Green Line Transit Oriented District Advisory Committee and the County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning have initiated the Green Line T.O.D. Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development Strategy Report and the Green Line T.O.D. Ordinance.

The strategies, zoning designations, and development standards in these documents will support commercial land uses, circulation systems, open spaces and public facilities which promote transit use, pedestrian activity and community revitalization. These provisions also support a variety of affordable housing types, and a safe and clean neighborhood environment. By supporting these objectives, we are encouraging the development of a more vibrant, safe, attractive, neighborhood-serving, pedestrian-oriented and transit-oriented environment. Ultimately, these objectives are aimed at revitalizing our neighborhoods, increasing transit-ridership, and improving the sense of community in the West Athens and Lennox Transit Oriented Districts.

III. LAND USE

Goals:

- ! *Appropriate land uses and densities which create vibrant, revitalized, safe, and viable pedestrian-oriented, and transit-oriented districts.*
- ! *Development standards which contribute to a pedestrian scale and the physical and esthetic improvement of properties in order to enhance the appearance, function and neighborhood pride.*
- ! *A sense of place and a sense of community by promoting forums for civic and inter-personal interaction.*
- ! *Street and walkway design and improvements, and circulation patterns which will promote pedestrian orientation and transit use.*
- ! *Design and development which is uniquely appropriate for each station.*
- ! *An attractive system of streets and pedestrian areas to support development and improvements.*

Issue A: **Inappropriate land uses in the Green Line T.O.D. areas.**

Much of the commercial portion of the study area is composed of auto sales lots, automotive repair uses, excess rail land, and underutilized and vacant parcels. These uses do not promote a pedestrian or transit orientation or neighborhood vitality, and are generally inconsistent with T.O.D. goals. Rather, land uses which are encouraged in the Green Line T.O.D.s include moderate density residential developments, neighborhood-serving and transit-serving commercial uses, mixed use commercial/residential developments, small pocket parks and transit facilities. The following strategies can help facilitate development of appropriate land uses in the T.O.D. study areas.

Strategies:

1. Process amendments to the General Plan, community plans, and the Zoning Ordinance which:
 - < Promote desirable and consistent uses in T.O.D. areas.
 - < Promote commercial uses which are uniquely neighborhood-serving, pedestrian-oriented, and transit-oriented adjacent to Green Line stations and throughout the T.O.D. areas.
 - < Create disincentives for the continuation of undesirable land uses within T.O.D. areas.

- < Allow appropriate uses without a discretionary permit and/or public hearing.
 - < Allow uses with a director's review which are neighborhood-oriented, but may also have potential compatibility problems.
 - < Require a conditional use permit for commercial uses that are not predominantly locally serving and pedestrian-oriented; and for which potential land use compatibility problems can be foreseen.
 - < Require a conditional use permit for intrusive uses such as utilities facilities, resource mining, and cemeteries.
 - < Promote mixed-use structures in commercial zones which encourage walking from residences to shops and from residences to the mass transit system.
 - < Promote a mix of residential and commercial uses by limiting retail commercial uses to the ground floor of mixed-use structures in commercial zones.
 - < Encourage outdoor dining.
 - < Establish appropriate height and floor area ratio incentives for mixed-use commercial combined with residential projects in the C-3 (Unlimited Commercial) zone.
 - < Promote in-fill development, consolidation, and better use of underutilized lots.
2. Develop a list of needed/desirable land uses to be encouraged in T.O.D. areas to serve the local community.
 3. Contact owners of non-pedestrian-oriented, non-transit-oriented, and non-locally serving businesses to discuss possible interest in relocating and/or moving their businesses.
 4. Ascertain whether a relocation assistance program would encourage inappropriate businesses to move.
 5. Assist in moving undesirable activities, and in the marketing of vacant property.
 6. Encourage pedestrian-generating uses at the ground floor levels of commercial and mixed-use buildings to stimulate activity in the areas around the transit stations.
 7. As an incentive for locating within the T.O.D.s, reduce parking requirements for a limited number of predominantly pedestrian-oriented commercial uses in commercial zones.

Issue B. Long-term property ownership without maintenance/improvements.

Some properties and structures experience many years of deterioration due to lack of maintenance by the property owner or manager. Unmaintained property and structures contribute to aesthetic and economic degeneration. The ultimate result of such degeneration is an unsafe neighborhood environment which is not pedestrian friendly and which discourages new development and investment. These strategies can encourage proper property maintenance and upkeep.

Strategies:

8. Support low interest loans and other incentives for ongoing maintenance and improvements.
9. Tie authorizations for new development and intensification of uses to requirements for property maintenance and upkeep.
10. Encourage the establishment of both volunteer and privately funded, citizen-based neighborhood beautification programs.
11. Establish and expand existing concentrated zoning, building and health code enforcement programs.
12. Require property owners to remove graffiti in a timely manner, and encourage painting with graffiti-resistant paints.
13. Explore the feasibility for initiating revitalization programs for facade improvements.
14. Encourage the ongoing availability of financing opportunities for the rehabilitation of residential and commercial properties.

Issue C. Low residential densities surround the Green Line transit stations.

Low density residential development dominates much of the study area, but exclusively low density development is not desirable within a T.O.D. A mix of residential densities, including some moderate density multiple-family developments, better promotes transit usage, a pedestrian orientation, and a solid customer base for neighborhood retail. The following strategies are methods which can be used to encourage increased residential density while maintaining or improving neighborhood quality, and achieving T.O.D. goals.

Strategies:

15. Adopt appropriate changes to the Zoning Code which:
 - < Encourage the development and expedite the approval of residential projects conforming to the densities permitted in T.O.D. plans.
 - < Provide opportunities for slightly higher residential densities in areas immediately adjacent to the T.O.D. transit stations.
 - < Allow senior citizen second units on single-family lots.
 - < Promote new mixed use residential/commercial development in commercial areas.
 - < Provide for height limit and floor area ratio incentives for mixed-use (combining residential and commercial) projects in commercial zones.
 - < Provide for density bonuses for the provision of affordable and senior citizen housing.
 - < Provide for density bonuses for the consolidation of underutilized lots in the development of multiple family residential projects.
 - < Provide for density bonuses for the development of in-fill multiple family residential projects.

16. Promote the provision of financing opportunities for the construction of second dwelling units.

Issue D. No land use, design, or aesthetic relationship between the Green Line transit stations and adjacent development.

Areas surrounding transit stations should be pedestrian-friendly and aesthetically pleasing. It will be more difficult to achieve these goals given the location of the stations within the median of the vast right-of-way which constitutes the 105 Century Freeway. Additionally, the land uses around the station study areas do not make the most productive use of this very important space. Examples of inefficient uses immediately adjacent to the station include vast storage areas, immense empty parking lots, physical barriers to pedestrian access, and other non-transit friendly and non-pedestrian friendly land uses. However, some things can be done in the areas surrounding the transit stations to provide a transition into the community. These include encouraging small, pedestrian-oriented retail and eating establishments, mixed-use developments and offices which will establish the tone for the community as a transit-oriented neighborhood. The key is to provide numerous pedestrian walkways and connections from the transit station to and from adjacent land uses, and from one land use and development to another.

Strategies:

17. Develop zoning and design standards which:
 - < Promote identifiable neighborhood transitions from transit station to commercial areas to multiple family residential areas.
 - < Promote transitional uses and encourage their implementation adjacent to transit stops.
18. Encourage the involvement of MTA with the implementation of transitional uses proximate to the transit stations.
19. Promote mixed-use structures in commercial zones which encourage walking from residences to shops and from residences to mass transit facilities.
20. Encourage pedestrian-generating uses at the ground-floor levels of both single- and multi-story commercial buildings to stimulate activity in the areas surrounding the transit stations.

Issue E. Unsafe living and working environments.

Places which are not safe to live or work certainly are not safe for pedestrians. One important component is the inclusion of transit-oriented districts is to include a combination of land use/design elements (lighted walkways, shorter walls and landscaping, mixed use projects) and police components (neighborhood watch, community policing, etc.) to increase overall neighborhood safety.

Strategies:

21. Develop “defensible space” design standards which contribute to perceived and actual safety.
22. Explore the feasibility of integrating police facilities, such as substations and overnight-parked police vehicles with T.O.D. development.
23. Establish and expand neighborhood watch programs.
24. Develop more heavily utilized activity nodes, including 24-hour commercial uses as part of T.O.D.s to deter criminal activity.
25. Provide for senior citizen developments which can help deter crime by ensuring a daytime presence in residential areas.

26. Improve physical development standards for street lighting and other safety-related streetscape improvements.
27. Pursue funding to increase staffing of Sheriff substations.
28. Support the existing Target Committee and Community-Oriented Policing Team (COPs) programs and encourage the expansion of both programs.
29. Support plans for expansion of existing sheriff's facilities in Lennox, and encourage the construction of an additional sheriff's station in West Athens.
30. Support the continued communication between the Sheriff's Department and the community that is presently fostered by the West Athens and Lennox Sheriff's Advisory Committees.
31. Support increased policing and security at Green Line transit stations and park-and-ride lots.

Issue F. Unsightly and unkempt appearance of properties and structures.

Unsightly properties contribute to a downturn of neighborhoods. Overgrown landscaping, garbage left in vacant lots, graffiti left on walls and unsightly structures all detract from neighborhood quality and vibrance, and make streets unfriendly to pedestrians. The following are a number of possible solutions to this issue, some directed at the property owner and others at the neighborhood in general.

Strategies:

32. Establish incentives for ongoing maintenance and aesthetic improvements of properties and structures.
33. Tie authorizations for new development and intensification of uses to requirements for property maintenance and upkeep.
34. Create community beautification programs, both volunteer and privately-funded.
35. Contact property owners and solicit their cooperation in improving the appearance of their properties.
36. Pursue funding to expand existing, concentrated zoning code enforcement programs, and enforcement of health and building codes.
37. Concentrate enforcement efforts on problems such as the accumulation of trash and junk materials; illegal window advertising, billboards, free-standing signs, and roof signs; inoperative vehicles; dangerously overgrown weeds, and other

nuisances.

38. Support the imposition of financial penalties for zoning violations which generate income for the violator (such as illegal garage conversions into rental units) which are not rectified in a timely manner.
39. Support the existing Nuisance Abatement Team in its efforts to eliminate nuisances, and coordinate code enforcement and law enforcement activities in the T.O.D.s.
40. Promote neighborhood pride/cleanup/reach-out programs.
41. Explore the feasibility of establishing business improvement districts, revitalization programs and redevelopment project areas for revitalizing business districts and providing for facade, streetscape, and pedestrian-oriented improvements.
42. Support the efforts of the Watts Labor Community Action Committee and the pending establishment of the Sheriff's Department Work Details Program to eliminate graffiti from the community, and encourage the expansion of these programs.
43. Provide for clean and safe pedestrian walkways and leisure areas.
44. Require property owners to remove graffiti in a timely manner, and encourage painting with graffiti-resistant paints.

Issue G. Lack of neighborhood services, e.g. markets, pharmacies and child care centers, etc.

The Green Line T.O.D. study areas presently lack the neighborhood commercial services which would encourage walking to transit stations, and at the same time to stores, doing day to day errands and purchases. Transit-oriented districts will encourage developments which provide the daily goods and services needed by neighborhood residents and office workers. The goal is to reduce dependency on automobiles and to create a cohesive neighborhood. For these reasons it is appropriate to encourage a variety of shops and services so as to lessen the necessity for making vehicle trips out of the neighborhood for convenience items and daily needs. These developments should generally be of a scale necessary to support the neighborhood and not so large as to draw automobile traffic from outside the neighborhood or district.

Strategies:

45. Establish a list of locally serving, pedestrian-oriented and transit-oriented uses to be permitted "by-right".

46. Develop incentives to encourage the private development of a variety of commercial neighborhood services.
47. Initiate changes to General Plan/Community Plan/Zoning Ordinance to permit neighborhood service developments where they are not currently permitted.
48. Provide information about development opportunities in T.O.D.s to realtors, property owners, developers, lenders and other interested parties.
49. Accommodate small grocery stores and restaurants on and adjacent to corner lots in multiple family residential zones with project review, notice to surrounding property owners and public hearing.
50. Accommodate incidental small-scale project-serving grocery shops, snack shops and restaurants on the ground floor in multiple family developments with project review, notice to surrounding property owners and public hearing. These commercial uses must be clearly secondary to the primary residential use of the property.

Issue H. Lack of neighborhood identity, and lack of a center and public spaces for civic or cultural activities

The Green Line T.O.D. study areas lack cohesive neighborhood identity and public places needed for the community to meet, interact with one another and enjoy social functions. A community center (or “town square”) and other public spaces provide an important function in transit-oriented districts by establishing places to forge neighborhood relationships and cohesiveness. Such facilities and spaces contribute to better neighborhood relations; concentrations of persons at civic and cultural events, and at public facilities; and acts as a deterrent to crime. The developed nature of the study areas makes it difficult to create a neighborhood center, but other options do exist. For example, the community might decide to designate an existing building or area as the neighborhood center and then provide design and landscaping enhancements which help the site fulfill this role. Additionally, the community may wish to designate additional public spaces for leisure interaction.

Strategies:

51. Provide for civic and cultural facilities in the context of new development.
52. Establish required zoning and design standards which promote the provision of civic and leisure spaces in development projects.
53. Work with neighborhood representatives to determine the type of civic uses which would enhance the community.

54. Encourage the provision of useful public open spaces for eating, leisure and entertainment.
55. Promote the location of County or other public facilities in the T.O.D. areas.
56. Encourage the establishment of a community center which will promote interaction among residents and a neighborhood atmosphere.
57. Allow for community centers with administrative review in commercial zones.
58. Encourage the formation and continuing operation of business alliances and chambers of commerce in the study area.
59. Support efforts to make the citizens of T.O.D. neighborhoods aware of community issues, activities and programs.
60. Explore possibilities for County acquisition of Southern California Water Company properties on the easterly corners of Budlong Avenue and 120th Street for the development of a park.

Issue I. Circulation patterns do not support neighborhood-, pedestrian-, and transit-oriented development.

Circulation patterns should support pedestrian use of rail transit and other non-automobile transportation modes. The existing circulation patterns in the transit district areas are not pedestrian-friendly. These areas lack a clear coordination between transit modes, and amenities for pedestrian and transit users which could maximize walking, bicycling and the use of mass transit in the T.O.D. areas.

61. Promote transit stops at high-use locations such as employment centers and more dense residential areas.
62. Promote wide sidewalks and safe auto/pedestrian interfaces.
63. Promote coordination between bus and rail mass transit schedules for the convenience of multi-modal transit users.
64. Encourage the establishment of bike paths and bikeways which link major residential areas with the transit station and other modes of mass transit.
65. Explore the feasibility of establishing a tram system for convenient transportation between the transit station and major points in the community.
66. Encourage the establishment of a system of informational signs which facilitate pedestrian movement from the transit station to major points in the community.

67. Encourage the provision of more frequent Green Line transit service with additional train cars to relieve overcrowding on Green Line trains.
68. Encourage increased maintenance of Green Line transit access elevators to reduce the frequency and length of “out of order” periods.

Issue J. Lack of identity/image in station areas.

The Green Line station areas lack a recognizable identity. The creation of an identity or image within each station area contributes to that area’s vitality and distinction from other station areas. The more unique an area can become, the greater the chance that area has for overall success. Station area identity, when studied and established by the area’s constituents, contributes to neighborhood pride and increases the desire to take good care of streets and properties.

Strategies:

69. Encourage the development of a public art program which:
 - < Utilizes public spaces for the generation and exhibition of art works by neighborhood residents and workers.
 - < Contribute artistically to neighborhood aesthetics and identity.
70. Encourage each neighborhood to explore what kind of identity they would like for their area.
71. Work with MTA to determine potential for station improvements or changes in station design, signage, etc.
72. Enhance areas adjacent to transit facilities through planting, new facades, signage, etc.
73. Encourage the development of a thematic and informative sign program which links the transit stations to other important destinations and “points of pride” in the T.O.D. neighborhoods.
74. Promote streetscape elements which lend to a unique and interesting neighborhood identity.
75. Support the activities of the Southwest Community Association in West Athens, and the Lennox Coordinating Council.

IV. HOUSING

Goals:

- ! *A diversity of housing types with a range of densities that will provide for neighborhood needs and capably support neighborhood commerce.*
- ! *Development of affordable and senior housing.*
- ! *Improvement in the condition and aesthetics of existing housing structures and housing stock.*
- ! *Convenient access between residential uses, and commercial and transit services.*

Issue A. Need for affordable residential development and rehabilitation programs which contribute to a neighborhood-, pedestrian-, and transit- orientation and to neighborhood pride.

More affordable housing can increase the proportion of residential ownership over renters and the associated desire for the owner to care for the property. A neighborhood full of absentee-owned properties is less likely to succeed than one in which owners live on-site. There is less transition in neighborhoods of this type, and greater overall stability. However, the provision of affordable housing rental units also benefits the T.O.D. neighborhood by attracting transit dependent residents who will, in turn, support new community-based commercial enterprises.

Strategies:

76. Promote all sizes of living units and levels of affordability throughout new residential and mixed-use developments.
77. Develop strategies to prevent isolated, strictly low-income/affordable neighborhoods and the stigma often associated with such districts.
78. Utilize General Plan provisions, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Development Commission programs to encourage development of affordable housing.
79. Assist the Community Development Commission in developing and promoting affordable housing projects.
80. Support the continuing availability of Federal and State funding for residential construction, maintenance and rehabilitation efforts on the part of residents, landlords, and developers.

81. Identify other sources of funding for affordable residential construction, and residential maintenance and rehabilitation.
82. Encourage the ongoing establishment and implementation of housing assistance and housing rehabilitation programs.
83. Promote housing which is designed and priced for transportation-dependent seniors.
84. Establish density bonuses with director's review for the provision of affordable senior citizen housing.
85. Establish density bonuses for the consolidation of underutilized lots in the development of multiple family residential projects.
86. Establish density bonuses for the development of in-fill multiple family residential projects.
87. Promote the availability of grants for sound attenuation in residential units within the flight pattern of Los Angeles International Airport.
88. Promote the availability of the Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Program whereby the Departments of Public Works and Health Services work together to identify units in need of lead-based paint abatement.

Issue B. Overcrowding.

Overcrowding in residential units creates problems such as lack of personal and familial space, and unproductive individual functioning and family interaction. Additionally, in overcrowded neighborhoods, residents experience problems such as inadequate parking, and insufficient recreation space and landscaping. All of these factors can be remedied with proper planning and design which promote more inviting neighborhoods which residents are more apt to care for and defend.

Strategies:

89. Provide additional housing at affordable rental and for-purchase rates to lessen overcrowding pressure on existing households.
90. Explore and try to relieve the causes of increasing household size.
91. Provide for moderate density multiple family developments immediately adjacent to the T.O.D. commercial core.

92. Develop ways to hold apartment owners accountable for illegal garage conversions.
93. Establish a system of inspections for illegal garage conversions in connection with new-ownership business license applications for existing apartment houses of more than four units.
94. Require useable open space and leisure areas in new residential development, and promote appropriate levels of park facilities in each community.
95. Establish residential densities for mixed use commercial structures which are comparable to those densities allowed in adjacent residential zones.
96. Establish lot coverage requirements in multiple family residential developments which ensure adequate light, air, openness, amenities, and promote creative and viable design.
97. Promote multi-family residential design and lot coverage standards which will encourage and facilitate a pedestrian-scale, pedestrian-oriented amenities, open spaces and creative design.
98. Require buffers and walls between multiple family residential developments and adjacent single family residential uses.
99. Establish landscaped buffer and appropriate daylight plane requirements for commercial uses and parking lots which are located adjacent to residential uses.
100. Establish and expand existing concentrated and targeted Code Enforcement programs.
101. Establish and implement noise and design standards which minimize the potential impacts of commercial uses on residential uses within mixed-use developments.
102. Establish parking design requirements which minimize conflicts between commercial and residential traffic among users of mixed-use projects.
103. Restrict the number of residential units allowed in individual multiple family residential structures in the absence of a conditional use permit.

Issue C. Lack of senior citizen housing.

The Green Line T.O.D. areas lack senior citizen housing developments. Senior citizens

are an important part of good T.O.D. composition because T.O.D.s are well suited to their needs. Seniors are often dependent on transit, and need goods and services which are close to home. These needs can be fulfilled in well-planned T.O.D. areas that specifically provide for senior citizen housing. Additionally, the presence of seniors in a community can help support local commercial enterprises and related revitalization. Senior housing can range from granny units (a second, smaller unit on the same property) to multi-unit senior apartments.

Strategies:

104. Promote senior citizen housing in the Green Line T.O.D.'s.
105. Contact developers of senior housing to determine their level of interest in senior projects in the T.O.D. areas.
106. Establish density bonuses with director's review for the provision of senior citizen housing.
107. Initiate changes to General Plan/Community Plan/Zoning Ordinance to permit senior citizen developments where they are not currently permitted.
108. Provide for senior-friendly services and amenities within T.O.D. areas.
109. Encourage the formation of public/private partnerships for the purpose of developing senior citizen housing.

V. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goals:

- ! *Availability of a range of commercial revitalization programs to the Green Line T.O.D. areas.*
- ! *Financial institution interaction with employers and developers (community and financial networking).*
- ! *Improvement in the condition and aesthetics of commercial structures.*
- ! *Neighborhood-, pedestrian- and transit-oriented development which generates economic activity.*
- ! *Convenient access to commercial uses from neighborhood residences and transit facilities.*

Issue A. Lack of financing/capital for new construction and rehabilitation.

Lack of financing for new development is a perennial problem within the study areas. There are a number of potential solutions, but most likely a combination of strategies will be needed to resolve this issue. As the following strategies are implemented, more investment potential may become available for the T.O.D. areas, which in turn, will aid in further implementation of these strategies.

Strategies:

110. Work with banks and lending institutions to make them aware of the benefits of and unique opportunities for investing in Green Line T.O.D. neighborhoods.
111. Develop a consortium of people who can assist T.O.D. businesses to obtain financing.
112. Promote pilot financing, subsidy, and incubator projects.
113. Concentrate on working with lending institutions who have expressed an interest in funding projects in T.O.D. areas.
114. Encourage the continuing establishment and operation of local, State and Federal

financing programs for new commercial construction, rehabilitation and business operations.

115. Provide information to the Community Development Commission about land suitable for potential development.
116. Identify MTA owned lands in and around the T.O.D. station areas, and encourage MTA to assist in joint development projects on these lands.

Issue B. Lack of interest on the part of businesses in locating and operating in T.O.D. areas.

There is a lack of interest on the part of businesses in locating within the T.O.D. study areas. One of the most significant solutions is to educate business leaders and owners, and the lending community on the unique opportunities and benefits of T.O.D. investments. The business community must learn that T.O.D. neighborhoods are viable communities with a high quality of life. The lack of experience on the part of developers in building T.O.D. projects, and observing how successful they can be, contributes to the trepidation by lenders. References to one or two good project examples and one or two project successes can help the business community overcome the fear of locating and investing in T.O.D. developments, and can increase available financing in the T.O.D. areas.

Strategies:

117. A consortium or economic development advisory group should be formed to address the unavailability of commercial financing in the T.O.D. areas, and to promote networking between business owners and public and private financing institutions.
118. Establish development incentives which may persuade owners to establish businesses in T.O.D.s, or to relocate existing businesses to T.O.D.s.
119. Promote community awareness of the available tax incentives for businesses within the Alameda Corridor State Enterprise Zone, which includes the entirety of the West Athens Green Line T.O.D. area.
120. Encourage the establishment of an additional Enterprise Zone to include the Lennox Green Line T.O.D. area.
121. Encourage the establishment of additional sources of tax incentives to support existing and potential businesses in the West Athens and Lennox T.O.D. areas.
122. Encourage the establishment of small business micro-loan and incubation programs for businesses within the West Athens and Lennox T.O.D. areas.

123. Support existing and expanded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs to aid business start-ups and operations in the T.O.D. areas.
124. Create flexible zoning requirements to stimulate both private and public investment.
125. Provide for easier case processing requirements for walking-oriented commercial and affordable housing projects.
126. Explore possibilities for local government financing of infrastructure improvements through public sector tax increment financing.
127. Explore the possibilities for local government reduction of development financing costs by creating opportunities for tax exempt financing.
128. Explore the possibilities for local government serving as guarantor of loans made to private sector developers and businesses.
129. Explore the possibilities for local government's participation as an equity partner in development projects.
130. Support organizations representing local businesses within the T.O.D.s.
131. Prepare master environmental documentation to expedite the environmental review process.
132. Encourage "by right" development for desirable land uses in lieu of discretionary processes.
133. Encourage the development of vacant or underutilized properties to uses desired by the community.
134. Produce some attractive prototypes of transit-based housing and mixed use developments which developers can mimic and learn from.
135. Promote incentives which encourage development on MTA properties and other properties adjacent to MTA stations.
136. Establish incentives for attracting new desirable business activities which would provide strategic neighborhood services, e.g. markets, pharmacies and child care.

Issue C. Lack of employment opportunities in T.O.D. areas.

Poor economic growth and modest building activity have resulted in a lack of employment opportunities in the T.O.D. areas. Good T.O.D. planning and implementation promotes an increase in a variety of employment opportunities. One of the primary goals of a T.O.D. is to develop mixed use projects and places of employment adjacent to transit stations and close to homes. Therefore, an increase in employment opportunities would be one of the many positive results of T.O.D. planning.

Strategies:

137. Consider developing a kiosk or other public information system which maintains employment listings for T.O.D. areas and areas around other transit system stations.
138. Encourage pedestrian-, transit-, and neighborhood-oriented development in T.O.D. areas so that more local employment opportunities are created by the additional office and commercial development space developed.
139. Develop employment assistance programs and promote contact between employment assistance personnel located inside and outside the T.O.D.

Issue D. Although heavily used, streets do not provide a convenient, comfortable, interesting or attractive system of routes for potential pedestrian and transit-oriented customers.

Streets should provide an inviting place for pedestrians to walk, shop and socialize by exhibiting convenient pedestrian-friendly businesses and employing good design. A pedestrian-friendly atmosphere will support commercial development and revitalization by drawing more people to shops and public areas for longer periods of time. Such an atmosphere will also encourage people to walk to transit stations rather than drive. In turn the presence of people on sidewalks and in public areas for more hours of the day will help reduce crime and make neighborhoods more lively and robust.

Strategies:

140. Provide for clean, safe and vibrant pedestrian walkways and leisure areas, and safe street designs.
141. Encourage urban tree programs near transit stations and throughout the T.O.D.s.
142. Require a landscape plan for all conditional use permit and director's review projects.

143. Establish standards for tree-planting within private projects and along streets.
144. Provide for well-lit pedestrian walkways in commercial areas.
145. Establish standards for facade design, building entrances, driveways, roofs and paving which promote pedestrian-oriented aesthetics.
146. Provide for lighting fixtures, landscaping, benches, bicycle racks, drinking fountains and other pedestrian-oriented amenities on major commercial streets.
147. Explore the feasibility of initiating revitalization programs for streetscape, facade and pedestrian improvements.
148. Apply for funding under MTA's "Call for Projects" to enhance streetscapes and make pedestrian-oriented improvements in the T.O.D.s.
149. Apply for funding under the Department of Public Works' landscaping programs to enhance streetscapes in the T.O.D.s.
150. Establish a parking requirement incentive in commercial zones for the provision of street furniture, bike racks, leisure areas and other pedestrian amenities.
151. Provide for the continued maintenance of street furniture, landscaping and other pedestrian-oriented improvements along pedestrian walkways.
152. Provide for facilitating amenities (e.g. curb-cuts, shuttles, etc.) which will increase mobility for seniors and the disabled.
153. Concentrate on enforcement efforts for blights such as illegal window advertising signs and illegal billboards.
154. Prohibit roof signs and freestanding signs due to their non-pedestrian orientation.
155. Establish appropriate standards for the design and maintenance of awnings in connection with commercial uses.
156. Encourage pedestrian-generating uses at the ground floor levels of both single- and multi-story commercial buildings to stimulate activity in the areas surrounding the transit stations.
157. Enhance pedestrian walkways by prohibiting residential uses on the ground floor of mixed-use projects in commercial zones.
158. Prohibit "drive-thru" fast food uses in the T.O.D. commercial areas.

159. Establish height limits, floor area ratios and development standards for commercial zones which promote a pedestrian-scale of development.
160. Establish design standards for commercial office space located at the ground floor level along key pedestrian ways in order to achieve pleasing and interesting facades.
161. Require recessing of each progressive story over two stories in commercially zoned developments.
162. Restrict the placement of commercial buildings to the front property line, or to a minimum front yard setback if pedestrian oriented amenities are provided by the business.
163. Encourage the use of construction materials, designs, and colors which are compatible with and complement the architectural style of structures.
164. Enhance pedestrian walkways by requiring the screening of mechanical equipment and trash receptacles of commercial and multiple family uses.
165. Prohibit the use of unsightly security fixtures and mechanisms.
166. Provide for convenient and safe pedestrian crossings in commercial areas, including adequate crossing times.

Issue E. Residents and workers in the T.O.D. do not use transit facilities.

A key component of the entire T.O.D. concept is to encourage residents and employees in the T.O.D. areas to utilize the available transit facilities more often. The incorporation of the various land use and design elements described in this report should help to encourage transit facility usage by making these facilities more convenient, safer, more functional and a more pleasant experience. Advertising the advantages of transit use will also increase ridership and support for local commercial enterprises in the T.O.D. Usage of transit facilities by residents is imperative in order for the T.O.D.s to succeed.

Strategies:

167. Promote educational programs which clearly explain the benefits of transit use to the public.
168. Promote accessibility to the transit stations from residences and workplaces in the T.O.D.s.
169. Work with employers and apartment owners to develop bulletin boards and information kiosks which promote transit use.

170. Enhance neighborhood aesthetics and safety.
171. Encourage continuing and new subsidies to reduce the cost of using transit.