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WASHINGTON TOD PLAN

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

Planning for transit-oriented development (TOD) is a way to address long-term challenges in the context of short-term uncertainty. It increases a community's capacity to integrate long-term goals into short-term investment plans, and it gives confidence to developers and the market because they can see that investments are being made in those long-term goals, investments that are essential to addressing current challenges and being well-positioned when conditions improve. When sufficient market forces are not present, the role of the public sector becomes an important ingredient for fostering TOD and the sustainable land use goals it advances.

As important as public sector involvement is in TOD implementation, the commitment and dedication of the greater Washington community to carry this plan forward will be critical to its success. The long implementation horizon requires perseverance and continued involvement. As various components develop, residents and stakeholders should continue to provide input and ensure that projects match the community vision. The community should pursue implementation of other recommendations from this planning effort to further support and bolster their TOD efforts. While there will be many individuals and agencies supporting the community's efforts, it will be up to the community to maintain the momentum and tout its success!

TOD Plan Elements

The Washington / East Washington TOD vision calls for a mixed-use neighborhood with increased activity in the heart of the community. The TOD vision will re-establish the vibrant downtown area that existed years ago. The neighborhood will offer a distinctive character and branding which will attract new residents and retain existing residents. Residents will be attracted to its many housing options (with choices for a broad range of household incomes), diverse population, short commute, accessibility from other areas, walkability, and access to natural features and recreational amenities. Where possible, the vision will be facilitated through redevelopment of the community's existing buildings and assets, including renovation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings. Where necessary, parcels will be redeveloped with buildings that fit the neighborhood character of development. The Washington / East Washington station area has a significant potential node for development: The East Chestnut Street Facility and Intermodal Transit Garage.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

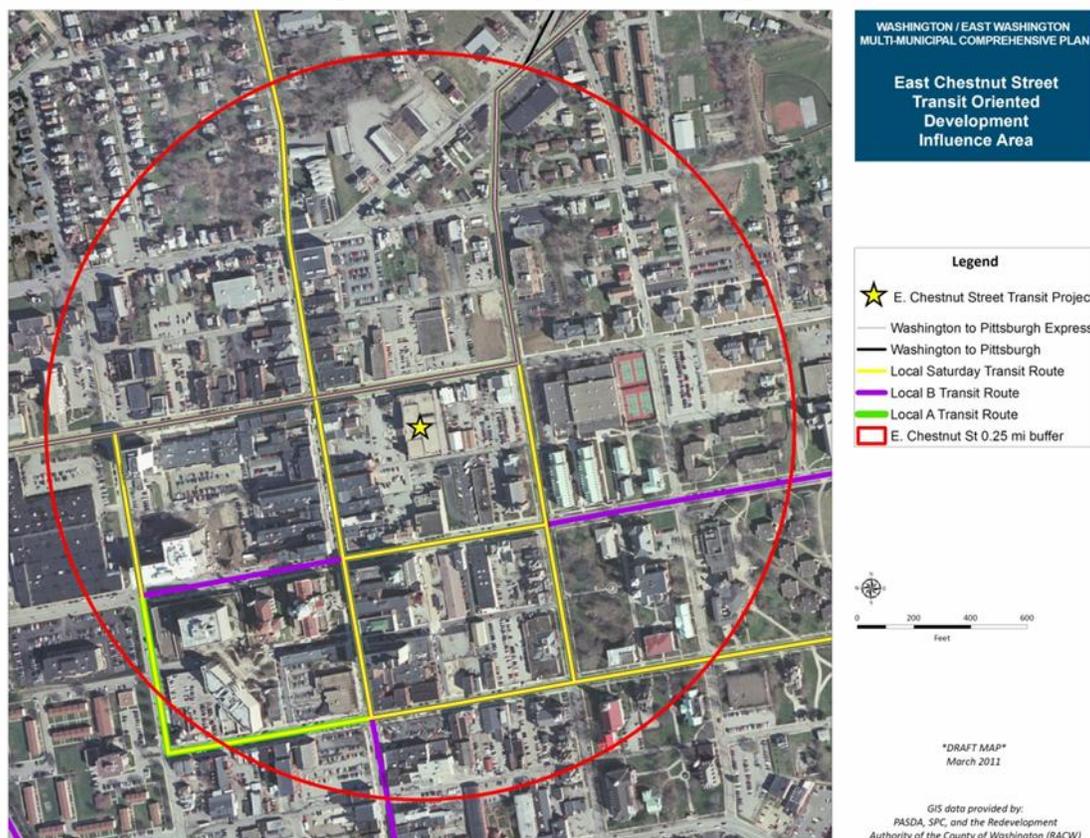
At public meetings, it was the consensus of attendees that the near-term priority for TOD is the redevelopment of downtown Washington, the area centered on the former East Chestnut Street parking garage. This area coincides with the Downtown Business District Revitalization area (the quadrant bounded by East Chestnut Street, North Franklin Street, East Beau Street, and North College Street). See Figure 1 for the location of the TOD focus area. In the immediate area, there is surface parking adjacent to College Street in the location of the future Washington & Jefferson Recreation Center. Although not adjacent, there is also another parking garage facility fronting Franklin Street called the Crossroads Parking Garage. The area immediately surrounding the potential TOD site is predominantly low-intensity surface parking and commercial. This TOD vision seeks to re-energize the neighborhood through a mix of land uses, including basic services, that will generate 24/7 activity around a central gathering spot.

A series of steering committee meetings were held during the course of the planning process. At the meeting dedicated solely to transit and transportation, held at the Washington and Jefferson Media Room on April 4, 2011, the project team introduced the project to the committee and facilitated small group discussion on the types of improvements and development that stakeholders would like to see in downtown Washington. Discussion at the meeting was very positive and the participants demonstrated their passion about their community and their commitment to improving it. Notes from the meeting are summarized below.

- Handouts included current transit routing maps, TOD success factor handout and aerial of East Chestnut St. Garage with ¼ mile radius for TOD success factor discussion.
- Discussed the current efforts of Washington City Transit, including the current routing study, and the transit survey. URS provided mapping of the current transit routes.
- URS explained how transit funding operated in both Pennsylvania and for Washington City Transit.
- The steering committee discussed possible transit funding opportunities with nearby municipalities.
- The steering committee discussed the possibility of WCT having a role in the school busing program and geographic relationships to parks and recreation opportunities.

In addition to the transit meeting, there have also been a number of other opportunities for discussion of transit conditions and planning in and around Washington and East Washington. The monthly steering committee meetings have proven to be a good forum for general discussion, as well as special called meetings for focus groups and other comprehensive plan areas.

Figure 1: TOD Study Area for Washington



ACTION PLAN

The TOD Plan for Washington / East Washington has 11 principal components, as shown below and in Figure 4:

- Infill mixed use residential (retail first floor, office or residential on upper floors) in walkable areas easily reached from the Intermodal Center. These areas will fall within one quarter-mile from the Intermodal Center, which is a generally accepted walkable distance for regular use. Place the buildings at the sidewalk line and place public parking behind. See Figure 1 for an example.
- Pocket parks at key locations to provide opportunities for relaxation and to open more of the public realm in the downtown area for interaction between residents, business owners, and visitors. These locations may also provide opportunities for live music, shows, and community gatherings. See Figure 3 for an example.
- Destination restaurant that would serve local residents, workers, and draw visitors in through the intermodal center. Place the building at the sidewalk line and place public parking behind.
- Daycare center with a landscaped outdoor play area. This service could prove to be very significant in providing additional flexibility for people to live and work downtown. The location could also be sited to strategically serve W&J as well. Place the building at the sidewalk line and place public parking behind.
- Assemble properties to develop anew building with first floor small grocery and offices or residential above. The grocer could possible work in conjunction with the Main Street Farmers Market to showcase local wares. Place the building at the sidewalk line and place public parking behind.
- Coordinate new development in the area with existing transit service through the Intermodal Center. Current routes in the area include all local WCT routes plus the Washington to Pittsburgh regular and express routes. Future transit routes that may result from the on-going WCT Transit Study will coordinate with the Intermodal Center.
- Consider a shuttle that connects the Intermodal Center with the Crossroads Garage so that patrons can easily make the transition between the two sections of downtown, Main Street, and the W&J Campus. Evaluate opportunities to utilize both parking areas to serve specific services and locations within easy walking distance.
- Improve the streetscape including wayfinding and crosswalks to facilitate walking within the Washington downtown district and improve the public realm. Improvements can include sidewalk repair and replacement, pedestrian lighting, placement underground of aerial utilities, banners and signage, crosswalk improvements, street furniture and other ornamentation, and wayfinding elements among others. Specify options for placement and type of benches, bike parking, pedestrian scale street lights, trash receptacles, signage, and other details as deemed appropriate.
- Construct a pedestrian bridge that would provide additional connections between the Crossroads Garage and the main downtown area. During public outreach it was noted that it is a long walk from some parts of the neighborhood to the businesses downtown.
- Improve bike access to the area by installing bike racks throughout and evaluating the potential placement of shared lane pavement markings or bike lanes on Chestnut Street, Main Street, College Street, and Beau Street.
- Where possible, facilitate renovation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

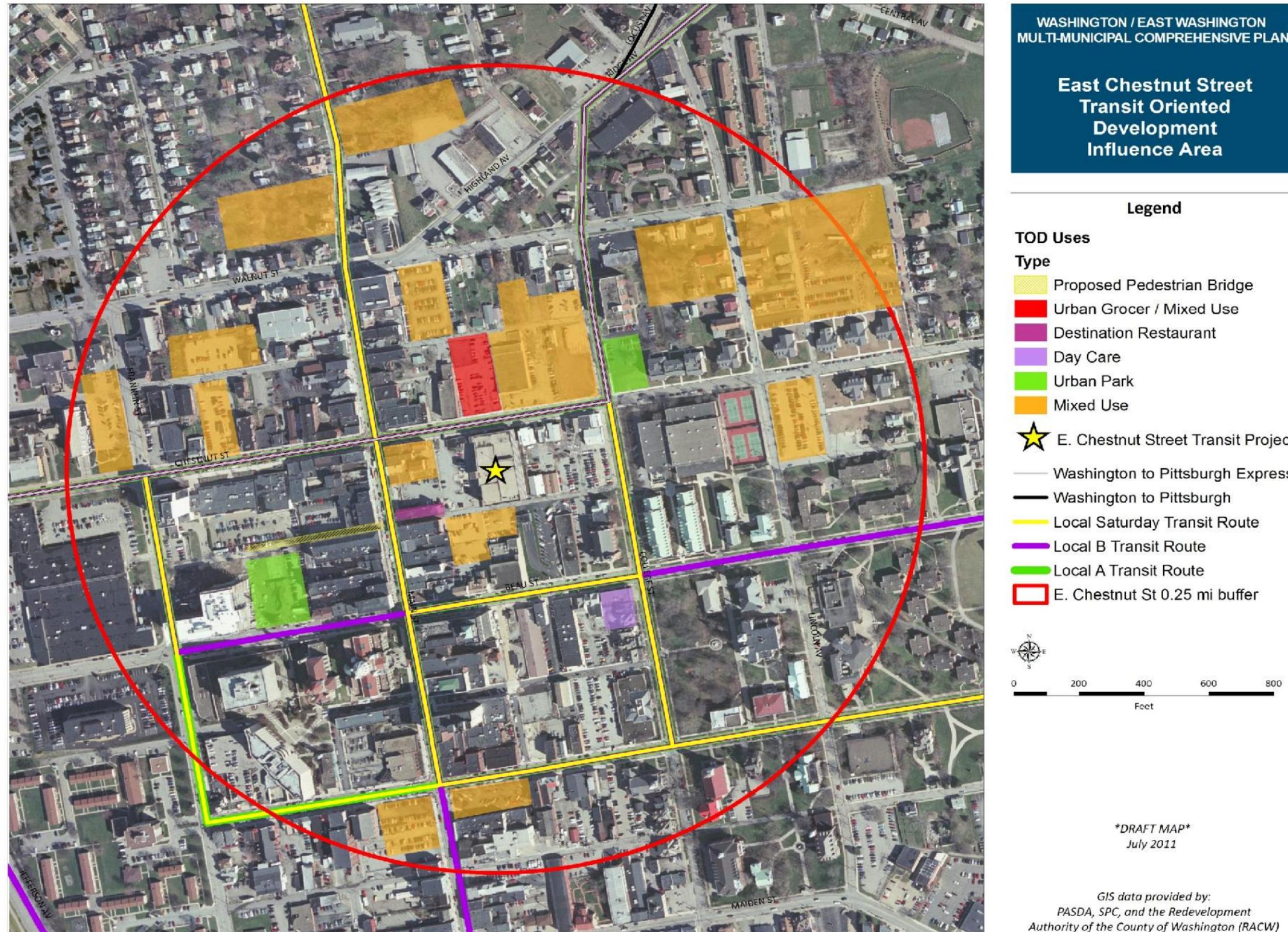


Figure 2: Example of Mixed-Use Building
Photo Credit: URS



Figure 3: Example of Pocket Park
Photo Credit: Arne Hansen / The Municipality of Copenhagen

Figure 4: TOD Concept Plan for Washington / East Washington



Components of Transit Oriented Development

For the Chestnut Street TOD station, the following components form the foundation for a successful redevelopment strategy that will encourage a renewed focus on this part of town.

Mix of Uses

As a part of the community's renewal, Washington would benefit from a return of basic services that residents could access without leaving the neighborhood. One of the indicators of those basic services is typically a desire for a grocery store within walking distance for most homeowners. While it seems unlikely that a major name grocer would be willing to invest in the spaces along East Chestnut Street or Beau Street, a possibility might be for a community-owned cooperative grocery store, such as a co-op, to thrive in an area like this one.

As mixed-use projects develop, implementation agencies should strive to attract businesses that will provide services and amenities to neighborhood residents such as drug stores/pharmacies, bakeries, dry cleaners, print and shipping stores, small cafes and restaurants, coffee shops, and medical offices among others. These same types of businesses will attract transit users, residents of neighboring communities, and employees of local businesses.

Housing Revitalization

The TOD plan calls for new housing in downtown Washington along Chestnut Street, Franklin Street, College Street, and as infill between Beau and Wheeling Streets as shown in Figure 4. These new housing units should provide options for a variety of household incomes and sizes. In addition to new housing, the team notes the importance of improving the existing housing stock in the neighborhood. The community has a very affordable housing stock. However, increased emphasis on retention of residents and maintenance of existing stock can be highlighted as ongoing needs. Community leaders should together to increase code enforcement and encourage homeowners to utilize tax abatement and loan programs to finance home purchases and improvements. In addition, the community should create an inventory of abandoned homes and use community revitalization tools to acquire these properties and prepare them for re-sale.



Figure 5: Example of Residential Development
Photo credit: URS

Washington Branding

New places compete for buyers. A place, like a product or a restaurant, must be marketed. A first step in marketing a place is to develop a brand. Branding a place, like branding a product, carries with it many benefits. Customers perceive brands as having quality and a name they can trust, knowing their experience will be a good one. Customers are also willing to pay a premium price for a brand and remain brand loyal over time. Through branding, which brings out a brand's distinct personality, a bond is created between the customer and the product or place, and enthusiasm for what is offered is generated. The opportunity here is that the redevelopment that will occur in downtown Washington can be branded and marketed and the public perception of that place will influence the perceptions that the public has about the downtown Washington neighborhood as a whole. Whether the branding recalls a historic place or reflects a new direction, it is important that the whole community participate in a discussion on its direction.

Parking

From an urban design perspective, the placement of all new buildings at the sidewalk line will unify the streetscape and create the activity mode that residents are looking for. Parking should be placed behind the buildings but with convenient access to building entrances. On-street parking, with competitively reasonable pricing, in downtown

Washington can reduce off-street parking needs, provide short-term access to local businesses, provide traffic calming improvements, and protect pedestrians from moving vehicles. To protect nearby residential streets from being used for parking by transit patrons, the City could consider including a portion of downtown Washington in the residential parking permit program.

Downtown patrons have made the consultant team aware that there are hurdles to overcome in reaching downtown destinations from the Crossroads Garage along Franklin Street. The grade between the garage and Main Street makes the walk uncomfortable for some, and that options should be developed to address this obstacle. As part of the TOD plan, we address this issue by recommending a battery of improvements, including shared publicity between all downtown parking facilities, coordinated transit connections between parking areas and key downtown destinations, and consideration of a shuttle service between parking facilities and downtown businesses. A shuttle service is likely to be cost prohibitive.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The following sections outline key considerations for successful implementation of the vision presented in this TOD plan: infrastructure costs, roles and responsibilities, phasing, zoning recommendations, and potential sources of funding.

Investment Projects

For the purposes of this plan, the project team compiled preliminary order-of-magnitude estimates of **public** infrastructure development costs for the study area. The cost estimates include expenses for engineering and design but do not include land acquisition. The project team expects that these concept-level estimates will be refined as the TOD plans are carried forward.

Table 1: Washington TOD Plan Infrastructure Cost Estimates

Project Component	Cost Estimate
Pocket parks at Beau Street and Chestnut Street	\$200,000
Grocery / mixed use cooperative	\$300,000
Streetscape improvements on Chestnut, Beau, Franklin, Main, and College Streets – includes wayfinding, crosswalks, sidewalk repair, lighting, street furniture, etc.	\$1,000,000
Shuttle connector downtown between Crossroads and Intermodal Center to destinations.	Unknown
Pedestrian bridge, elevators, and stairs connecting Crossroads Garage and Main Street	\$3,000,000
Bicycle parking facilities at various locations (estimate 10)	\$25,000
Placement of aerial utilities underground	\$4,000,000

Roles and Responsibilities

Successful TOD projects require a collaboration of many parties – primarily the local government (typically involving more than one department, division, or authority), the transit agency, and real estate developers.¹ All three must form a partnership to allow TOD projects to overcome the regulatory, market, and other issues that usually make TOD implementation difficult. Other participants in the process include community development corporations, the metropolitan planning organization (MPO), and local community stakeholders, but the primary responsibility for TOD implementation rests on those three primary entities. The key responsibilities of local government, developers, and transit agencies are outlined in the following table.

Table 2: Roles and Responsibilities of TOD Participants

Participant	Roles and Responsibilities
City of Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the community process through interaction and communications with local stakeholders including neighborhoods. Control the regulatory actions including the planning, zoning, and permitting process (such as developing new TOD zoning codes or ordinances). Use other implementation tools such as infrastructure construction (for example, streets and utilities), land purchase and assembly, and creation of urban design and related guidelines.
Developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop TOD proposals and site plans through careful collaboration with the local government and transit agency. Work through the regulatory and entitlement process by obtaining needed zoning, permits, and other approvals. Securing financing for TOD projects. Complete any needed land assembly for the projects. Manage final design and construction of the projects.
Washington City Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with local governments to develop station area plans and TOD concept plans. Develop and enhance the transit infrastructure to best serve the TOD project. Provide advance land assembly for future resale to the local government or developer when permitted by statute. Prepare joint development proposals on agency-owned land to enhance agency revenues and supplement surrounding development. Facilitate construction coordination when transit investments are being built or expanded concurrently with joint development or TOD.

For the Washington / East Washington plan, the City of Washington, primarily through the Planning Commission, the Washington Business District Authority, and Washington City Transit, will take the lead on many of the elements.

¹ The commitment and dedication of the Washington / East Washington community to carry this plan forward will be critical to its success. The long implementation horizon requires perseverance and continued involvement. As various components develop, residents and stakeholders, including the arts community, should continue to provide input and ensure that projects match the community vision. It will be up to the community to maintain the momentum and tout its success!

Potential funding agencies, such as PennDOT, will support the implementing parties. Throughout all phases of implementation it is crucial that the community be given meaningful opportunities for providing input on the elements.

Phasing Plan

The phasing and implementation matrix shown below provides a draft work plan for implementing the elements of the Washington TOD Plan. The implementation tasks are grouped into three implementation phases: short term (0 to 2 years), medium term (3 to 10 years), and long term (10 to 20 years). The short-term implementation phase focuses on kicking off the design of catalyst projects such as streetscape improvements and the Washington / East Washington plaza / parklet. The construction of these elements early in the medium-term phase will support and enhance the viability of the recommended mixed-use development and infill elements by demonstrating to developers and potential residents that the community is committed to its redevelopment plan. In addition, these early projects will provide amenities to current residents. Another early priority for the medium-term phase is the design and construction of the pedestrian bridge which will give current residents and visitors another connection into the heart of Washington / East Washington. The long-term phase includes development in the busway station area should part or all of the area become available for development.

Table 3: Washington TOD Plan Implementation Matrix

Implementation Element	Responsible Parties
Short -Term Phase (0 to 2 years)	
Engineering and design of pocket parks	WPC, WSD, WBDA
Engineering and design of streetscape improvements on Chestnut, Beau, Franklin, Main, and College Streets	WPC, WSD, WBDA, WCT
Pursue property for grocery / mixed use cooperative	WPC, WBDA, Property Owner
Implement bike lanes or share-the-road signs and pavement markings in Washington / East Washington	WPC, WSD, WBDA
Create community branding campaign	WBDA, W&J College
Medium-Term Phase (3 to 10 years)	
Construction of pocket parks	WPC, WSD, WBDA
Construction of streetscape improvements on Chestnut, Beau, Franklin, Main, and College Streets (on-going as funds are available)	WPC, WSD, WBDA, WCT

Implementation Element	Responsible Parties
Engineering, design, and construction of pedestrian bridge, elevators, and stairs connecting Crossroads Garage and Main Street	WPC, WSD, WBDA, WCT
Assemble parcels for mixed-use development and parking improvements along Chestnut Street. Issue developer Request for Proposals.	WPC, WPA, WBDA, WCT
Pursue infill development in areas surrounding the Chestnut Street Intermodal Center.	WPC, WBDA, WCT
Long-Term Phase (10 to 20 years)	
Secure funding to supplement shuttle service between Crossroads Garage and the Intermodal Center	WBDA, WCT
Ongoing	
Participation and input on design and implementation of project elements	Washington / East Washington residents, Washington / East Washington Council, transit users

Key

WPC – City of Washington Planning Commission

WSD – City of Washington Street Department

WPA – Washington Parking Authority

WBDA – Washington Business District Authority

WCT – Washington City Transit

Financing Strategies

TOD projects are difficult to finance given their multiple elements and differing implementation timeframes. Implementation partners must be savvy to identify appropriate funding sources and manage their use. A catalog of potential financing mechanisms and assistance programs was compiled for this TOD plan. Some of the most promising implementation mechanisms for TOD in Washington are described below. Because many programs' funding levels are subject to change, it is necessary to contact the funding source directly to find detailed and current funding information.

Development Incentives

There are numerous development and redevelopment supportive incentive programs available from state, regional, and local agencies, many of which include federal pass-through funds. Table 4 summarizes many of these incentives.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania programs include several grant and loan programs, like **Building Pennsylvania** and the **Economic Advancement Program** that provide direct funds for site development and redevelopment activities. In addition, the **H2O PA Act**, created programs that provide grant funds to government entities for water infrastructure improvements, including flood control, drinking water, and sanitary sewer and storm sewer projects. The Commonwealth, through the **Industrial Sites Reuse Program**, also offers grants and loans that government entities and authorities can utilize to investigate and remediate industrial sites. The **Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP)** is a tax credit program that encourages businesses to invest in projects that improve distressed areas. In addition, but not detailed on the chart below, are several below prime loan and loan guarantee programs directly to businesses for expansion and improvements, including the **Pennsylvania Capital Access Program (PennCAP)**. The **Housing and Redevelopment Assistance (HRA) Program** provides state-funded grants for community revitalization by assisting the community in becoming competitive for business retention, expansion and attraction and spurring further economic development. The **Growing Greener II Program** assists in business development and public improvements in core communities. Growing Greener covers capital improvement costs associated with acquisition and predevelopment. Finally, the Commonwealth will provide guarantees to eligible Tax Increment Financing (TIF) programs.

At the local level, Washington County Council on Economic Development (WCCED) and the Washington County Economic Development Partnership (WCEDP) have many incentive programs that government, developers and/or businesses can use to support development and redevelopment initiatives.

Table 4: Summary of TOD Development Incentives

Incentive Program Title	Funding Source				Eligible Funding Activities									Funding Range					Eligible Entities					Fund Type				
	Federal	State	Local	Other	Acquisition	Development	Redevelopment	Site/Infrastructure	Commercial	Industrial	Residential	Support Services	Mixed-Use	\$10K to \$100K	\$100K to \$500K	\$500K to \$1MM	\$1MM to \$5MM	> \$5MM	Municipalities	Non-Profits	Authorities	Lenders/Entities	Developers	Business Owners	Grant	Loan	Tax Credit Equity	
Building Pennsylvania																												
Business in Our Sites																												
Community & Business Dev.																												
Economic Advancement																												
Growing Greener II Main Street and Downtown Development ¹																												
Housing and Redevelopment Assistance Program ²																												
H2O PA - Flood Control																												
H2O PA - Water Supply Sanitary Sewer & Storm Sewer																												
Industrial Sites Reuse																												
Neighborhood Assistance Program																												
Regional Economic Development District Initiative													Varies															
Increment Financing (TIF/TRID)																												

An up-to-date resource regarding Washington County assistance and incentives can be found at http://www.washingtoncountyworks.com/incentives_programs/

TOD implementing agencies are strongly encouraged to incorporate low-impact, green infrastructure components into any improvement. The Three Rivers Wet Weather agency is an excellent resource on this topic as well as a potential funder of such improvements.

Other State and Federal Transportation Funding Programs

There are a number of state and federal transportation programs that can provide funding to implement transportation elements that support development plans and increase their viability. Federally funded transportation programs could be subject to change in the near future when a new transportation authorization bill is enacted.

- **Federal Transit Administration Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program:** This program provides funding to transit systems in urbanized areas for transit capital and operating assistance. Expenses related to the construction facilities such as transfer facilities, intermodal terminals, and bus shelters, including design and engineering, and land acquisition are eligible under this program. At least one percent of the funding apportioned to each urbanized area must be used for transit enhancement activities such as historic preservation, landscaping, public art, pedestrian access, bicycle access, and enhanced access for persons with disabilities. The local match is 20 percent of capital expenses (10 percent for bike-related projects).
- **Federal Transit Administration Section 5309 Bus and Bus Facilities:** This federal discretionary program provides capital assistance for buses, bus-related equipment, and facilities. Eligible capital projects include the purchasing of buses for fleet and service expansion, bus maintenance and administrative facilities, transfer facilities, bus malls, transportation centers, intermodal terminals, park-and-ride stations, acquisition of replacement vehicles, bus rebuilds, bus preventive maintenance, passenger amenities such as passenger shelters and bus stop signs, accessory and miscellaneous equipment such as mobile radio units, supervisory vehicles, fare boxes, computers and shop and garage equipment. The Federal share of net capital expenses is 80 percent. The federal share is 90 percent for bicycle access projects.
- **Transportation Enhancements Program / Hometown Streets / Safe Routes to School:** A portion of federal transportation funding is set aside for enhancement projects such as constructing pedestrian and bicycle facilities and landscaping and beautification among others. PennDOT oversees the projects after selection is made through a competitive process conducted by SPC. The Home Town Streets program funds a variety of streetscape improvements projects that are vital to re-establishing downtown and commercial centers. Projects may include sidewalk improvements, planters, benches, street lighting, pedestrian crossings, transit bus shelters, traffic calming, bicycle amenities, kiosks, signage and other visual elements. The local match is 20 percent of the total project cost. Projects may be awarded up to \$1 million. SPC does not anticipate conducting a funding cycle for these programs in 2010.
- **Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative Program (PCTI):** This new program administered by PennDOT is intended to fund planning and construction projects that demonstrate creative and efficient ways of addressing various transportation challenges through strong local partnerships and with careful consideration of community goals.
- **Surface Transportation Program:** The Surface Transportation Program (STP) is a federal program that provides flexible funding to be used by States and localities for projects on any Federal-aid highway, including the National Highway System, bridge projects on any public road, transit capital projects, and intracity and intercity bus terminals and facilities. SPC oversees the processes for defining the projects that will receive this funding.
- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ):**The CMAQ program, jointly administered by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), provides funds to State DOTs, MPOs, and

transit agencies to invest in projects that reduce criteria air pollutants regulated from transportation-related sources. Funding is available for areas that do not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (nonattainment areas) as well as former nonattainment areas that are now in compliance (maintenance areas). SPC manages the project selection process for CMAQ in southwestern Pennsylvania.

- **Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA):** This program provides Federal credit assistance for large transportation projects of regional and national importance. The possible assistance includes direct loans, loan guarantees, and standby lines of credit. Many types of transportation projects are eligible. More information can be found at www.fhwa.dot.gov/ipd/tifia/.
- **State and Federal Earmarks:** The US Congress and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania can fund projects at their discretion through targeted earmarks.

Other Notable Federal Initiatives

TOD proponents should be aware of two other Federal initiatives that support TOD planning and implementation. In June 2009, the US Department of Transportation, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the US Environmental Protection Agency formed the Partnership for Sustainable Communities (PSC). Through this partnership, the agencies are working together to ensure that their programs provide and support affordable housing, community revitalization, transportation choice, lower transportation costs, and environmental quality. The partnership initiatives will be handled primarily through existing funding and grant programs. However, HUD has recently announced the Sustainable Communities Initiative program. The initiative currently has an appropriation of \$67 million for three purposes:

- Support preparation of regional plans for sustainable development that integrate housing, transportation, and environmental quality;
- Support preparation of execution plans to implement existing sustainable development plans; and
- Provide funding to communities that have sustainable development plans in place and have a need for funding to implement a catalytic project or program that demonstrates commitment to implement a broader plan.

TOD proponents should continue to follow this program's evolution and determine if it might provide funding opportunities in the future. Additional programs through the Partnership for Sustainable Communities include the HUD Choice Neighborhood Planning Grants, Bus Livability Grants, and TIGER Transportation Discretionary Grants. More information can be found at <http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/>

CONCLUSION

The Washington TOD Plan builds upon and complements the community's recent efforts to address issues at a community, grass-roots level. As with any truly successful community plan, the community's residents must champion change and lead the effort to move forward. Recognizing the community's desire to improve first at its center, the implementation plan focuses on making short-term publicly-funded investments in improved streetscapes and public spaces that will benefit existing residents while demonstrating to visitors, future residents, and prospective developers that the community is committed to moving forward. And, at some point in the future, (if the opportunity presents itself), the community may be able to build upon its success and extend their community vision outward!