



SOUTH CENTRAL TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)

EQUITY & INCLUSION KEY FINDINGS

Economic Inequality Impacts the Corridor

- The considerable economic, environmental and health benefits of walkable, mixed-use development are currently not available in the corridor
- Market rates for new development and the cost of related public realm improvements under current city, county and utility impact fee and service fee financing practices could price out most current residents and small businesses

Many Opportunities to Include and Benefit Local Residents and Businesses

- Economic inclusion strategies include lowering barriers to ownership, reducing the cost of occupancy, whether through efficiencies (transportation, energy, water) or through subsidy targeting and using workforce development and small business support to capture the value of the envisioned corridor improvements
- Inclusion in setting community priorities starts with the workshop—by bringing together a representative group of stakeholders—but also include processes led by non-governmental organizations (e.g. the South Central Collaborative) and possibly by regional businesses (e.g. national commitments made by lenders pursuant to the Community Reinvestment Act and actions taken by the City or State to make use of Opportunity Zone incentives)
- “Community benefits” and “good neighbor” agreements can help ensure inclusion in planning and resulting development and adoption of a development without displacement policy
- Not all development can happen at once, and not all short-term development needs to be permanent; serious consideration of an incremental and successional development strategy can achieve development without displacement
- Putting public realm improvement and shared asset recommendations (land control and land banking) into place now can pace development to give time for the necessary community capacity and protections to be put into action, while setting the table for more intensive development in the near and medium term

The South Central Neighborhoods Transit Health Impact Assessment supports the view that a focused effort on providing a walkable, mixed-use, livable corridor environment is essential to an equitable development outcome. Recent neighborhood surveys conducted by Promise Arizona and the Sonoran Institute suggest strongly that a strategy of addressing equity and climate risk together is necessary for both community support and success.

Strategies for equity and inclusion include:

Address heat risk, water security and walkability as a priority set of initiatives for both livability and economic benefits. The updated affordability analysis for combined housing and transportation clarifies the need to “leave no savings behind.” The Reinvent Phoenix analysis illustrates the public revenue benefits of higher density mixed income mixed-use development. This recommendation carries the sense of using the South Central Corridor communities as an accelerated test-bed for and recipient of the many resources becoming available for these purposes.

Adopt a policy for affirmative economic inclusion in corridor development. Phoenix currently lacks inclusionary zoning for affordable housing which should receive serious consideration. Keeping housing affordable near transit provides both housing and transportation affordability and supports local business patronage, further reinforcing walkable and livable community character. Targeting supportive resources to help local renters and small businesses to become owners of their property helps maintain affordability and supports traditional business character.

Adopt a community-based strategy for placemaking and cultural resilience. Transit stations are not just access hubs in a network; each of the corridor’s seven stations can become centers for creating and celebrating cultural identity and character. Models for doing this systematically are being aggressively implemented by a national network, SPARCC (for Sustainable Prosperous and Resilient Connected Communities) in Los Angeles, Oakland, Denver, Chicago, Atlanta and Memphis.

Help build wealth and move residents and businesses economically ahead by capturing the value of sustainable development. This includes workforce development for filling the new jobs being created in urban greening and implementing energy efficiency; business development and incubation; and the entire suite of strategies for affordability, which lower the cost of living. For example, there are significant financial counseling programs in Phoenix (e.g. offered by Trellis and by local credit unions). These programs can be modified to focus on significant savings from using transit services and other strategies that further lower the cost of living for energy and food. A model for this, Equity Express, has been field tested by the Center for Neighborhood Technology and community partners in Chicago, Cleveland and Oakland.

