KCATA

TRANSIT-ORIENTED NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

KCATA

Our goal is to create a cycle of reinvestment and equitable growth across the metro, where transportation facilitates development and development facilitates transportation.

https://www.kcata.org

PREPARED BY:
gouldevans

TABLE OF CONTENTS

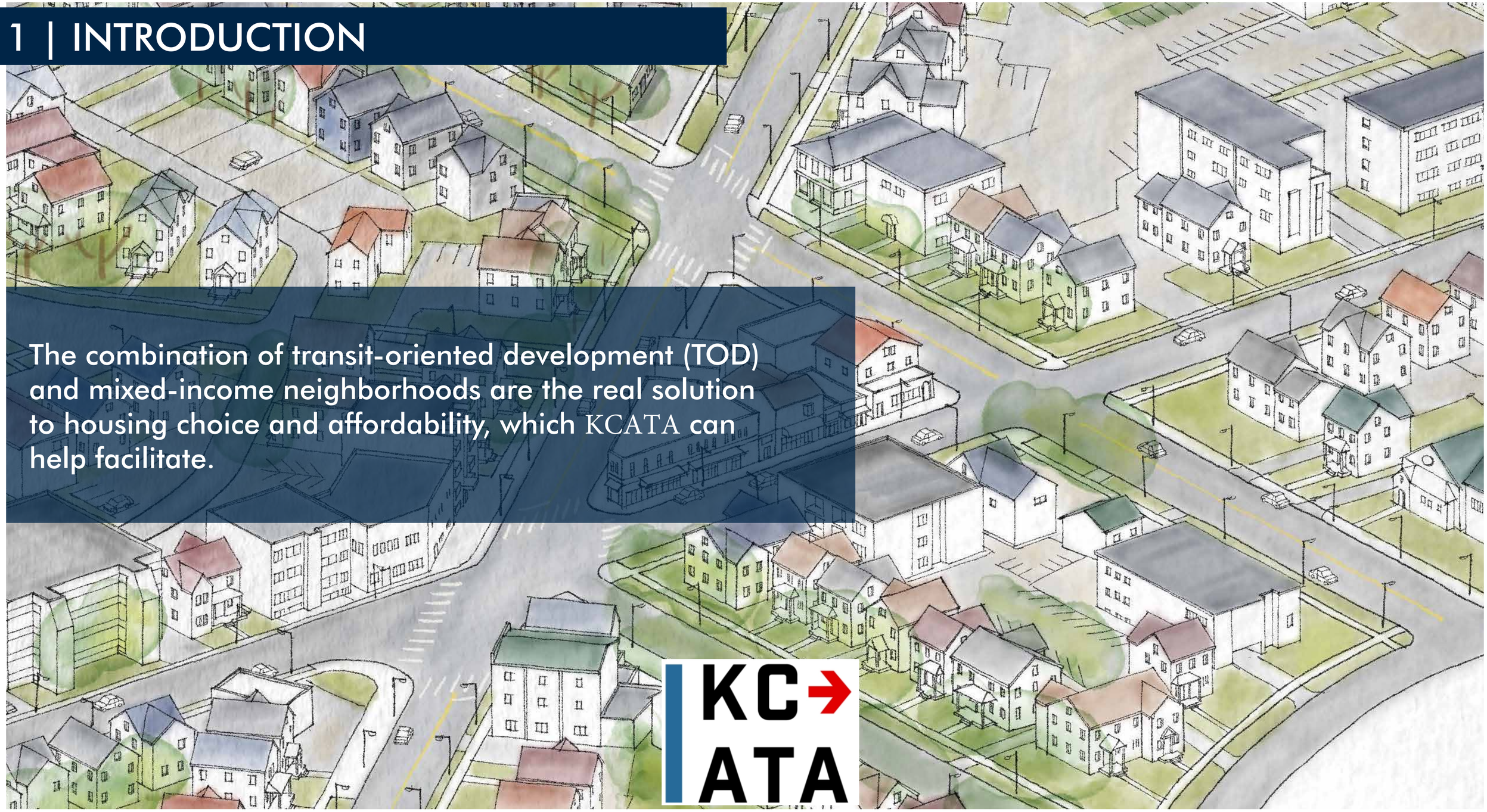
This document is intended to define a path forward for KCATA in their pursuit of a vital transit system. Transit-oriented development is a proven method to create the places that can repair, reestablish, and strengthen our neighborhoods to support transit. This document defines what transit-oriented development is, where it can be successful - now and in the future, and other endeavors that will support the KCATA mission.

We look forward to working with you.

https://www.kcata.org

RIDE KC Development Corporation

1 | INTRODUCTION



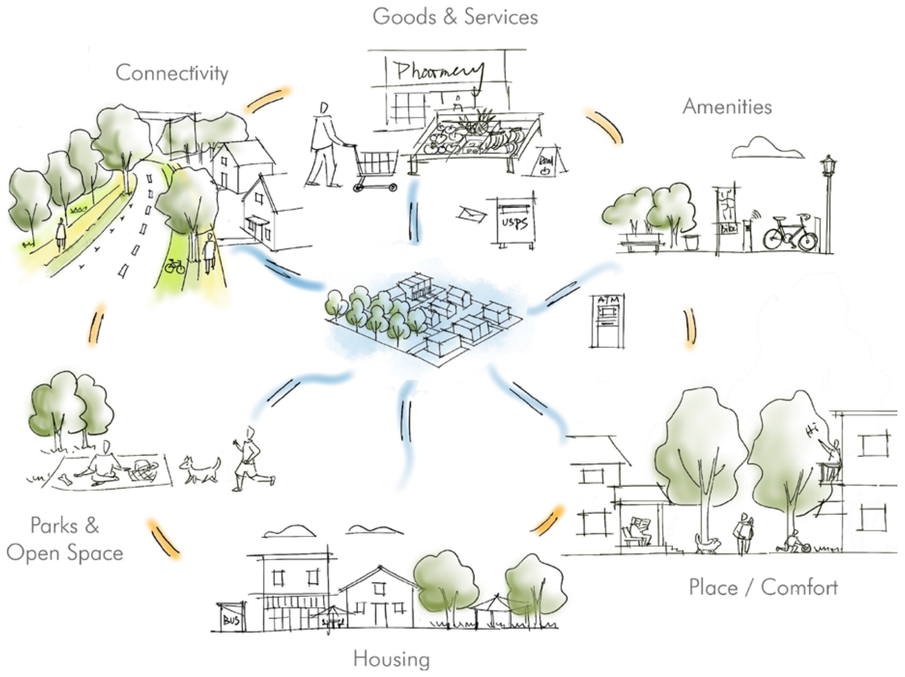
The combination of transit-oriented development (TOD) and mixed-income neighborhoods are the real solution to housing choice and affordability, which KCATA can help facilitate.

WHAT IS "TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT"?

A TIMELESS IDEA WITH A MODERN APPROACH

Transit-Oriented Development ("TOD") is term used to describe development patterns supported by our multimodal transportation systems. When put into action, it creates vibrant neighborhoods, supported by many forms of mobility, and improves community access. Many historic streetcar suburbs and urban core neighborhoods in Kansas City can be described as transit-oriented, because they are composed of a distinct activity center where people used to board the streetcar, surrounded by walkable blocks connecting seamlessly into the neighborhoods. Transit-oriented neighborhoods have three distinct features:

- Compact – Transit-oriented neighborhoods contain efficient development patterns at various scales of development, enabling a greater number of people to have walkable access to the transit system.
- Connected – Transit-oriented neighborhoods provide balanced multimodal (pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and auto) facilities between neighborhoods and transit, promoting access to both local and regional destinations.
- Diverse – Transit-oriented neighborhoods support a variety of uses, including a variety of housing types, goods and services, and everyday amenities.

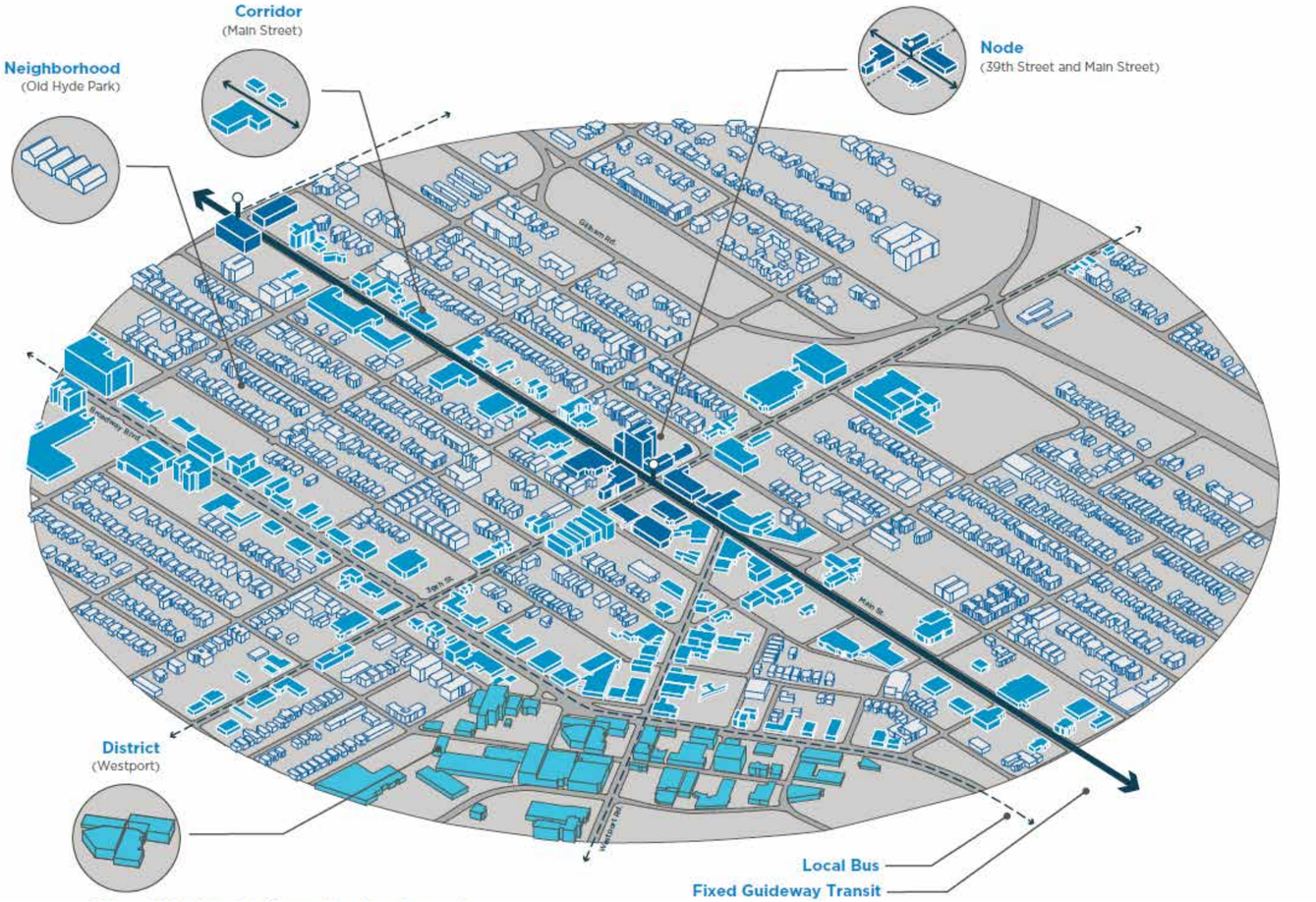


KC ATA

WHY TOD?

Transit-Oriented Development makes neighborhoods more livable by expanding access to daily destinations, including jobs, education, healthcare, and goods and services. TOD can reduce the cost of living, by decreasing the reliance on personal vehicles through the establishment and reinforcement of robust, walkable, and connected places. The outcomes are threefold:

- Physical – a variety of uses, enhanced local/regional connectivity, and improved facilities enhance access by foot, bike and transit, improving public health.
- Economic – reduced cost of living, efficient, productive development patterns, and incremental development opportunities can help build individual, family, and community wealth.
- Social – the variety of uses, including commercial and housing opportunities, creates life-long full-service communities and supports local businesses.



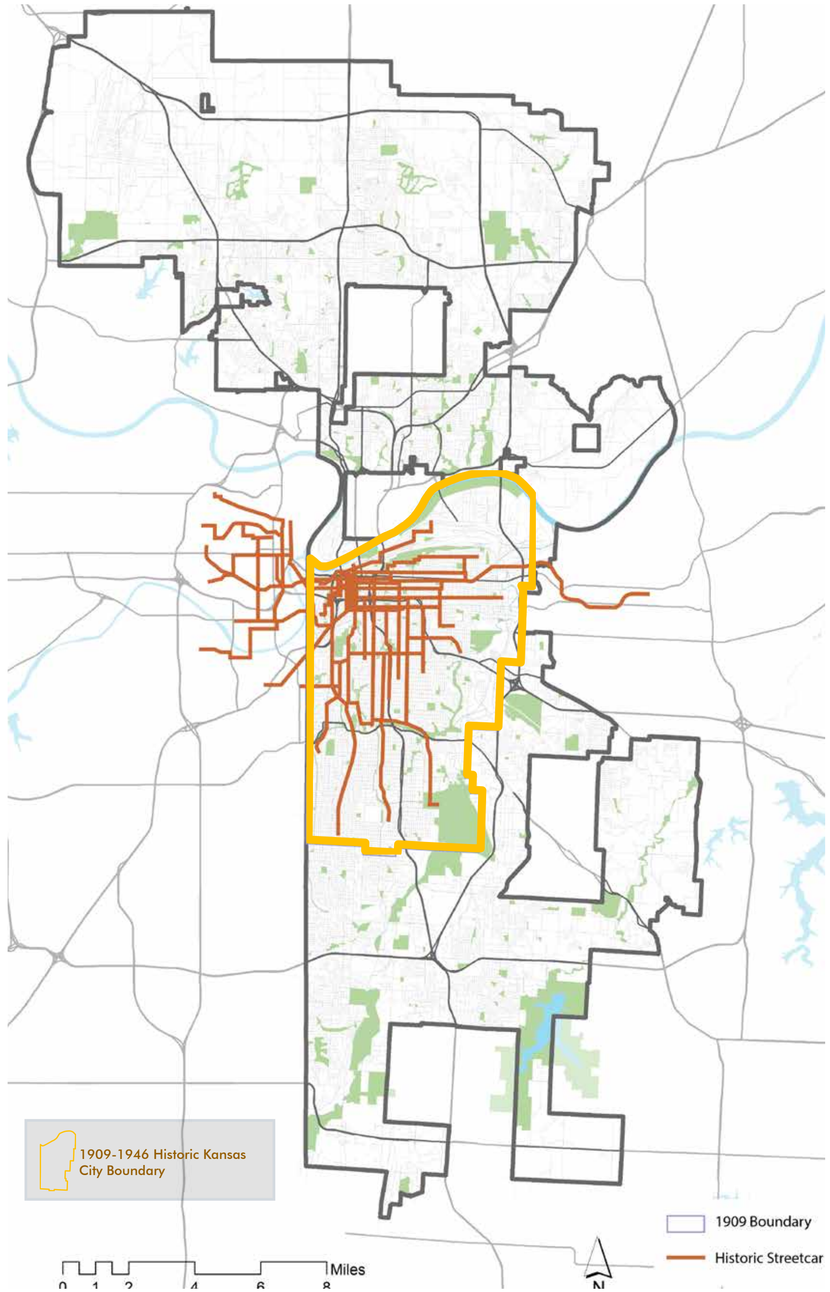
KCMO TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT POLICY

EVOLUTION OF KANSAS CITY

Kansas City was once a transit-oriented city. Between the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Kansas City established one of the most extensive streetcar systems in North America, and built transit-oriented neighborhoods around more than 300 miles of streetcar. First introduced in 1870, Kansas City spent 8 decades as a streetcar city, growing from a small village on the Missouri River, into a full-fledged city of more than 400,000 people within 60-square miles by the 1940s.

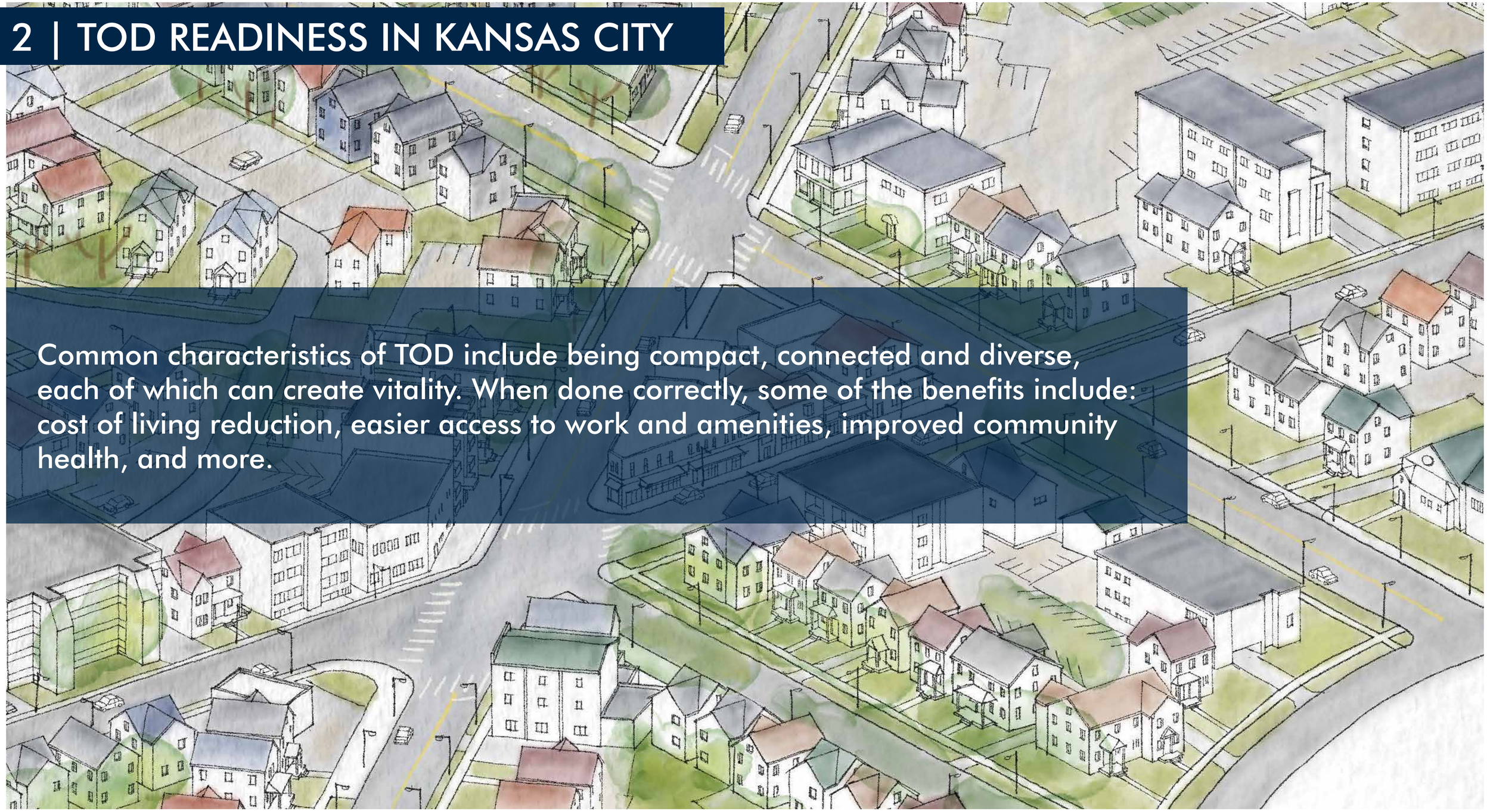
The era following World War II saw drastic shifts that led to mass suburbanization and urban disinvestment. Introduction of the automobile to the masses, distorted conditions that had created the transit-oriented development pattern of Kansas City within its 1909-46 boundary. This condition was intensified by federal investment in the interstate highway system and federal subsidies for mortgages that allowed people to live further outside the city. The first of a long series of annexations began in 1947, and the last line of the historic streetcar network was shut down by 1957, as buses and automobiles became the primary transportation modes. The suburbanization of Kansas City, and white flight, spread the population far beyond the original 1909 boundary, eventually expanding the service area of the Area Transportation Authority to 4,423 square miles covering the metropolitan area in Kansas and Missouri. This produced new, car-oriented contexts in the Missouri and Kansas suburbs, and led to significant disinvestment in the core.

Understanding Kansas City's transportation and development history is key for moving towards a transit-oriented city that makes smart, fiscally sustainable, and socially impactful investments.



HISTORIC STREETCAR ROUTES OF KANSAS CITY

2 | TOD READINESS IN KANSAS CITY



Common characteristics of TOD include being compact, connected and diverse, each of which can create vitality. When done correctly, some of the benefits include: cost of living reduction, easier access to work and amenities, improved community health, and more.

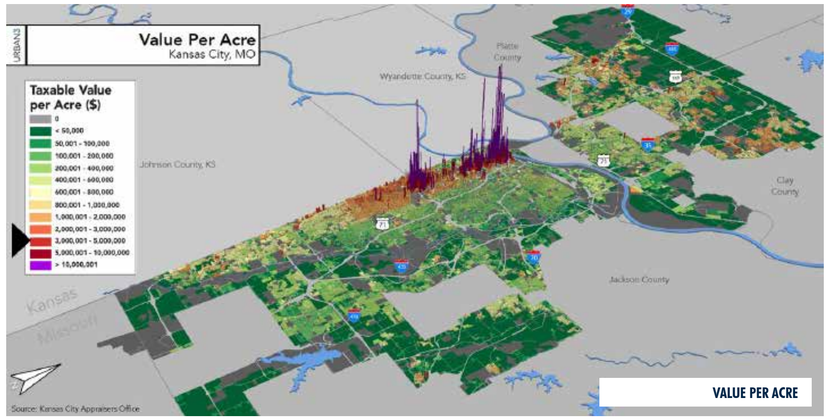
THE POWER OF DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

The present-day development pattern of Kansas City is deeply tied to its transportation history, and impacts the fiscal efficiency of public investments. The value per acre mapping prepared for Kansas City illustrates the efficient use of land and infrastructure for different development patterns exhibited through property value. Today, some of the most efficient areas of our city are where the streetcar networks were built a century ago.

And yet, despite having the same development patterns of the most productive areas, Kansas City's East Side has seen a sharp decline in value. This shift can be attributed to racially motivated practices that historically suppressed investment and wealth-building opportunities for Black and immigrant families, including redlining and blockbusting. The impact of these practices has been intergenerational and has not yet been rectified. Reinvestment in these areas must prioritize wealth-building for existing residents, while equitable development can be employed to repopulate these core neighborhoods.

Sustaining fare-free transit in Kansas City will require building a city that is fiscally robust and intentionally transit-oriented. Development patterns play a foundational role in making this possible. This awareness is critical as we rebuild our city in a more equitable way with greater housing options and affordability. This will require ongoing, public discussions amongst city stakeholders, citizens, and leadership.

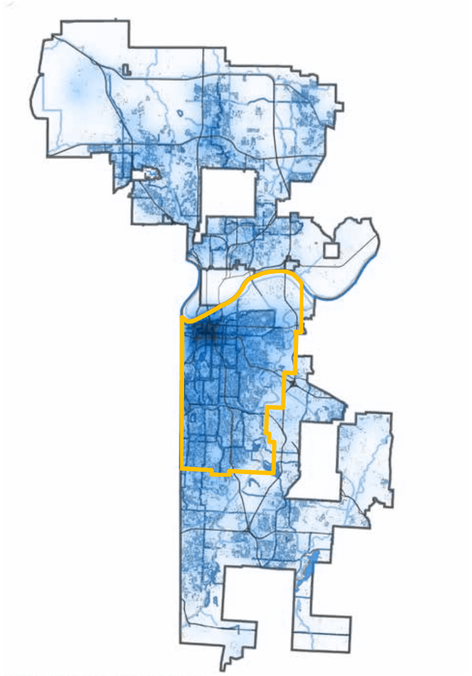
KANSAS CITY IN 1938
LIFE Magazine Photographer William Vandivert, 1938



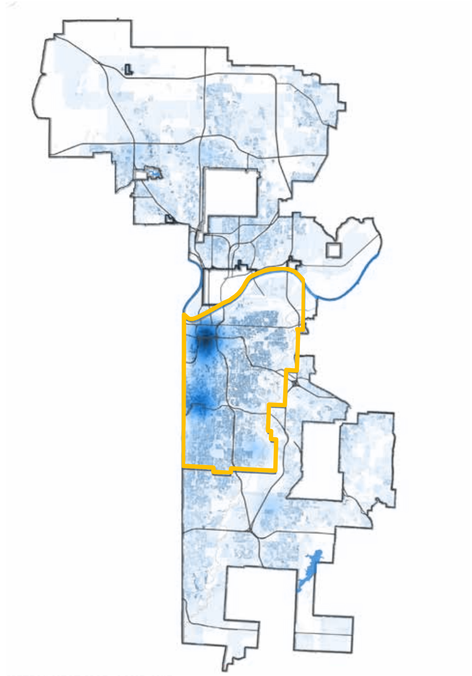
VALUE PER ACRE

KANSAS CITY'S HISTORIC REDLINE & VALUE PER ACRE

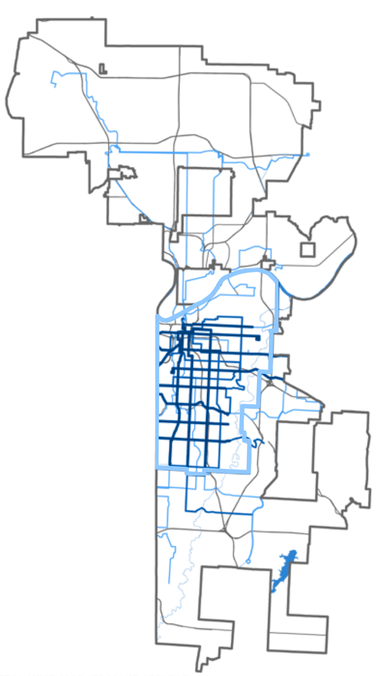
Source: Urban3



METRIC HEAT MAP: URBAN DESIGN



METRIC HEAT MAP: LAND USE



METRIC HEAT MAP: TRANSIT SERVICE

TRANSIT-READINESS

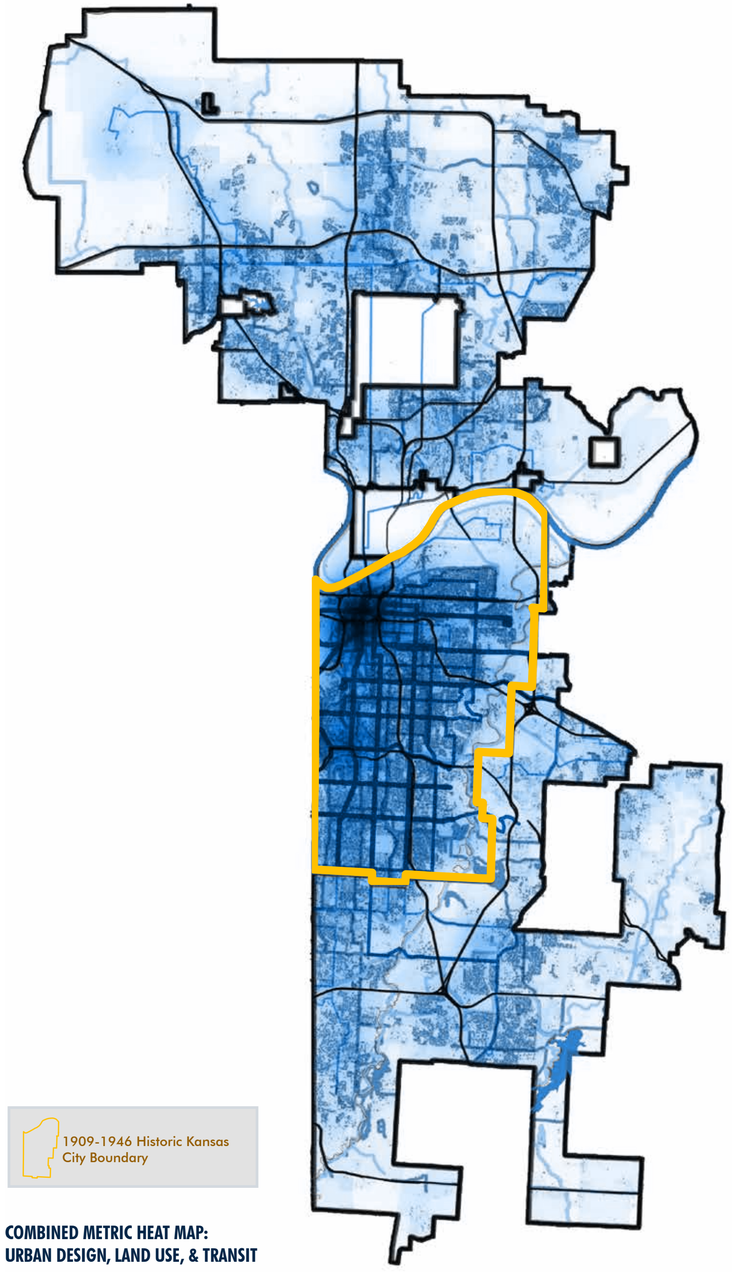
Transit-oriented development is an ideal approach to rebuild Kansas City and throughout the region. However, not all areas are well-positioned to support TOD because their existing patterns, uses, and transit service conflict with TOD principles. TOD-readiness is an assessment of both the current characteristics of different areas in the city, as well as Kansas City's planning policies and regulations. The assessment identifies those areas where investments in TOD are ripe and should be prioritized. Existing metrics for land use, urban design, and transit service provide context for areas of Kansas City that are currently reflecting TOD environments in their public and private investments. The maps illustrate the extent to which neighborhoods are aligned with principles of transit-oriented places and TOD.

Transit-Readiness Assessment Metrics:

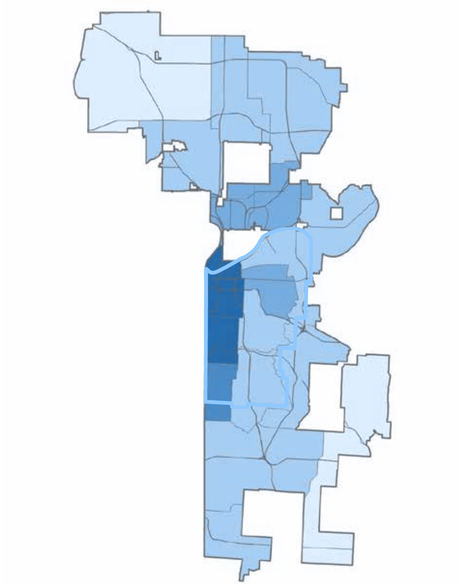
- Urban Design – Intersection Density, Bike Network, Pedestrian Infrastructure
- Land Use – Job Density, Destination Density, Residential Lot Patterns
- Transit Service – Citywide Routes and Frequency Additional detail regarding the assessment metrics can be provided upon request.

Additional detail regarding the assessment metrics can be provided upon request.

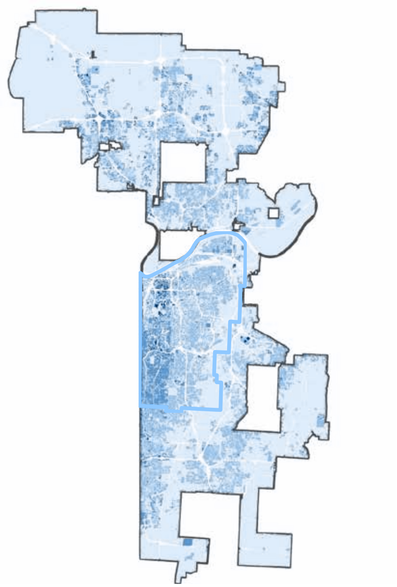
The combined metric map (right) illustrates in the darkest blue areas where neighborhood conditions in Kansas City are most aligned with the principles of transit-oriented development. Not surprisingly, the most transit-oriented areas are generally aligned with the original 1909 boundary, that part of the city originally built for transit.



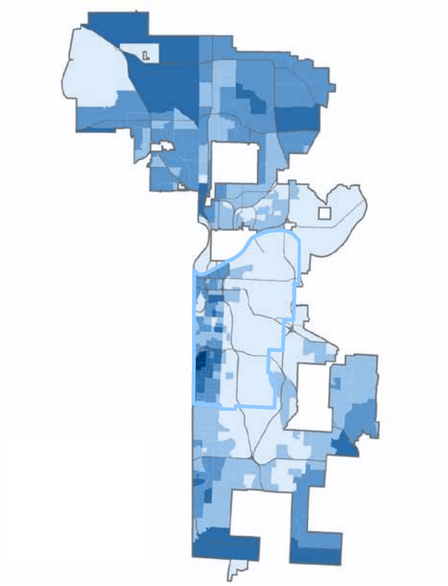
COMBINED METRIC HEAT MAP: URBAN DESIGN, LAND USE, & TRANSIT



TAX REVENUE PER ACRE: PROPERTY, SALES, EARNINGS



ASSESSED PROPERTY VALUE PER ACRE BY PARCEL



MEDIAN HOME VALUES; 2010 CENSUS

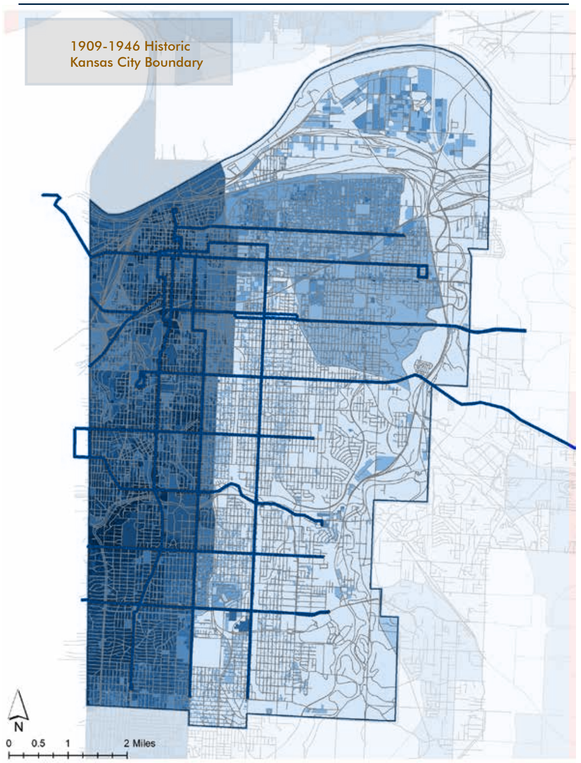
FISCAL PRODUCTIVITY

The productivity of development patterns are measured by the return - measured in private development - against the investment in public resources. In other words, a property is productive if it generates more tax revenue than the cost of the public infrastructure that supports it. The productivity of communities is an important measure of fiscal sustainability. The productivity of a place is directly related to its physical development patterns – the more compact, connected and varied the place, the more productive the place. The more dispersed, disconnected, and singular in use the place, the less productive. The maps above illustrate the productivity metrics used to assess the city and identify where productivity exists.

Productivity Assessment Metrics:

- Tax Revenue per acre – revenue generated through sales, resident income, and property on a per acre basis.
- Assessed Value per acre – the current value of properties, measured on a per acre basis to measure efficiency of development patterns.
- Median Home Value – home values averaged per census block group.

Productivity measures illustrate the value of compact, connected, and varied development patterns to the city, as is evident by the values generated within the urban core from State Line Road to Troost Avenue, the Missouri River to 71st Street. What is also evident from the maps is the value that is missing within the remainder of the 1909 Kansas City boundary. This "East Side", as it often referred to, shares the same development patterns and connectedness, and once shared the same variety of use, as the area west of Troost. However, as mentioned previously, racist policies and practices suppressed investment and opportunities in neighborhoods east of Troost for decades, causing the East Side to lose population. While this has been detrimental to the neighborhoods, this now represents a tremendous opportunity to generate value and create local wealth. The reuse of existing infrastructure, and the development patterns and connectivity that are largely still intact would create a significant return, for the city, on past public investments.



TOD READINESS: PRODUCTIVITY

PLANNING POLICIES

Investment in the transit system and in transit-oriented development should be targeted to neighborhoods with planning policies that support key principles of transit-oriented development and walkability. The documents that guide development and investment in Kansas City's neighborhoods are the Area Plans. These Area Plans contain community-created planning policies and strategies intended to guide land use, development, and public investment decisions for the next decade. The plans also provide recommendations that guide the physical development of neighborhoods on topics such as transportation, housing, economic development, and infrastructure.

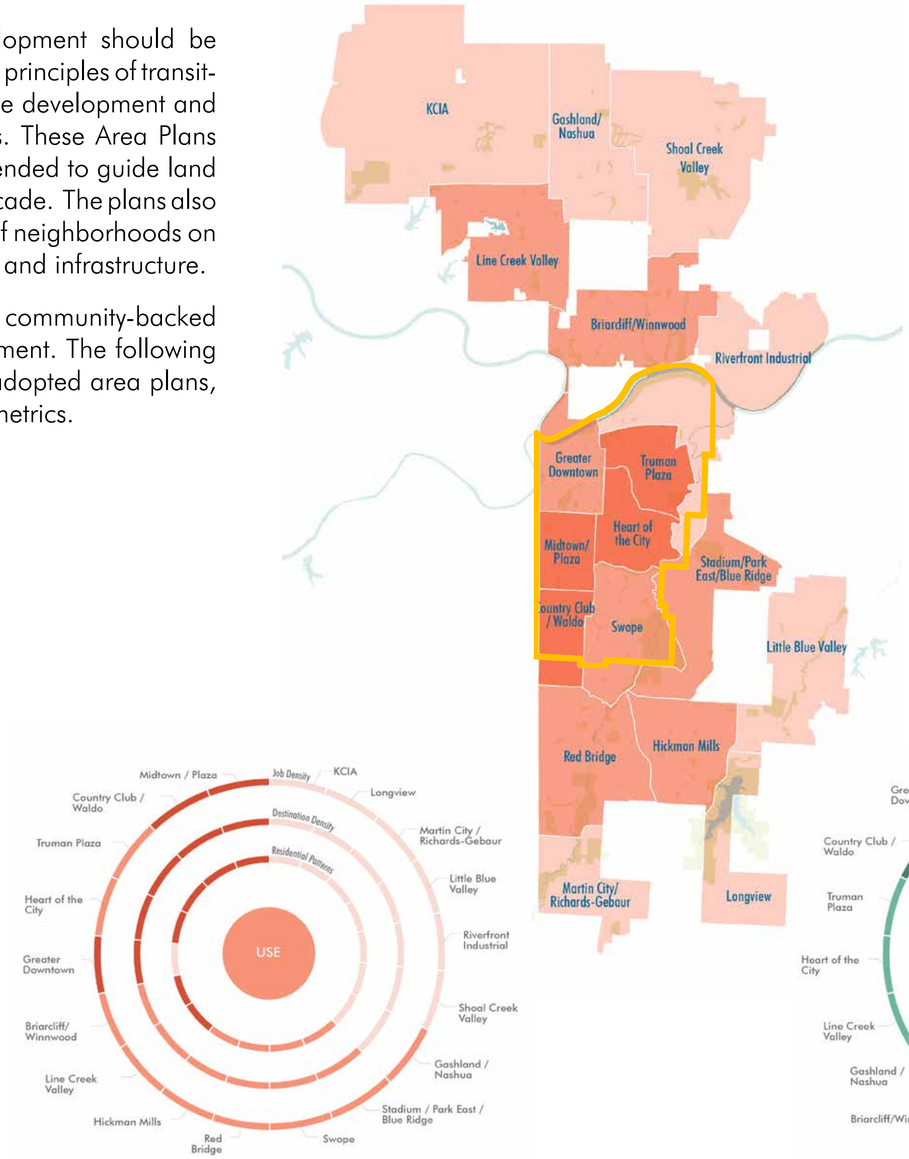
An assessment of each Area Plan provides context for where community-backed priorities are aligned with principles of transit-oriented development. The following maps illustrate a summary of the analysis of Kansas City's 18 adopted area plans, where plans were assessed against the transit-readiness policy metrics.

Transit-Readiness Policy Metrics

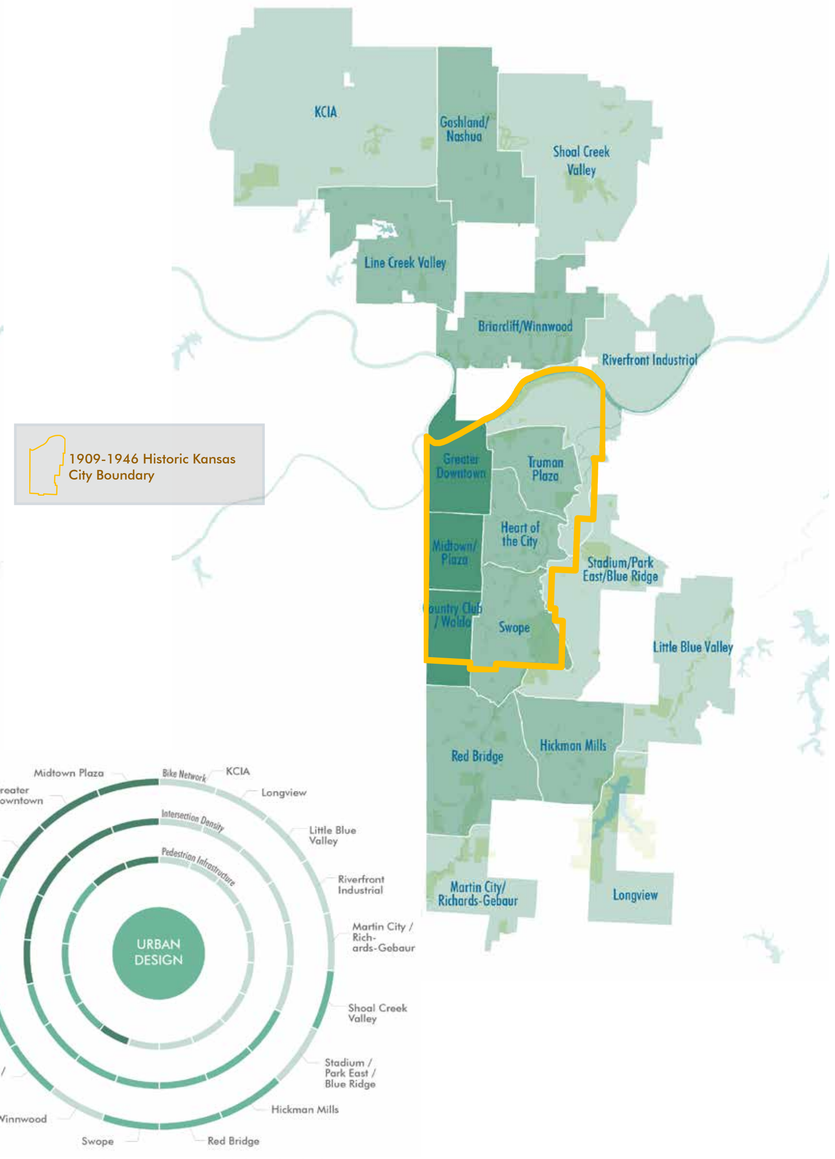
- Land Use – Diversity of Activity, Housing Options, Concentrated Investment
- Urban Design – Walkable Street Network, Multimobility, Pedestrian-oriented Development

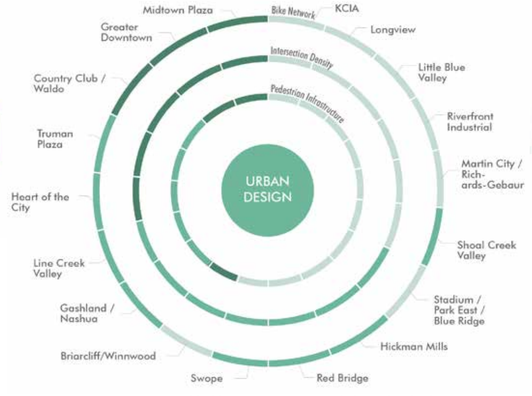
The five areas of Kansas City, that constitute the majority of the original 1909 city boundary, contain planning policies that are highly aligned with TOD principles – Greater Downtown, Midtown/Plaza, Truman Plaza, Heart of the City, and Country Club/Waldo. While other sub-areas of the city also contain some transit-supportive planning policies, the language of these plans indicates that TOD is not the highest priority.

Kansas City's adopted Area Plans contribute a broader understanding of where investments in TOD would be most impactful for the city. Adopted planning policies are most aligned with transit-oriented development principles in contexts that had been supported by the original Kansas City streetcar system, and future investment in the transit system and TOD should be prioritized in these areas.



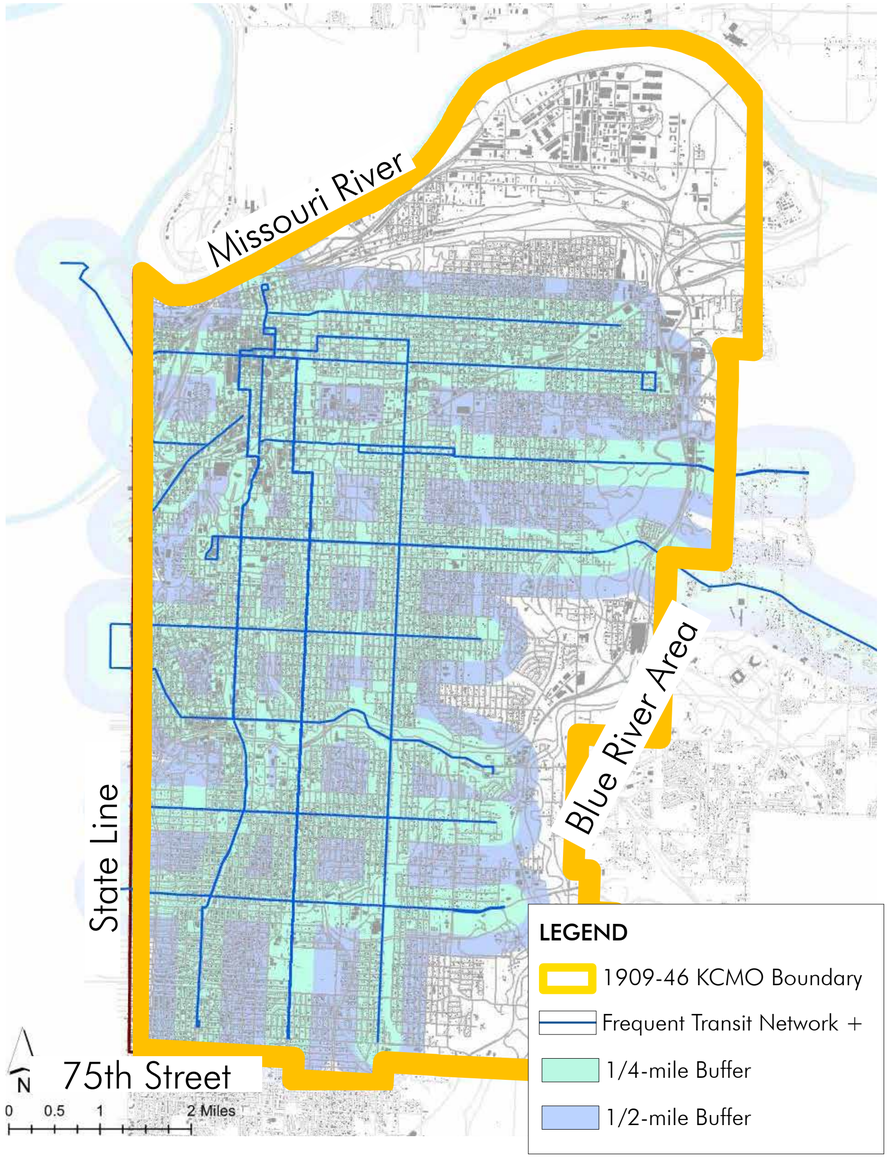
AREA PLAN ASSESSMENT: LAND USE POLICIES





AREA PLAN ASSESSMENT: URBAN DESIGN POLICIES

PRIORITIZING THE URBAN CORE



FREQUENT TRANSIT NETWORK +

In the first Quarter of 2022, the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority will implement a redesign of the transit system service across the metropolitan area. The redesign will provide more robust service to those that rely on transit, specifically creating a grid of 15-minute, north-south/east-west, service routes know as the frequent transit network ("FTN"). The FTN incorporates the streetcar, Bus Rapid Transit, and bus service within an area generally defined by the State Line on the west, the Blue River on the east, 71st Street on the south and Independence Avenue on the north; an area that covers most neighborhoods within the historic 1909-46 boundary of Kansas City. The "FTN+" system network identify areas within 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile from the new FTN transit network, as well as notable additional key corridors including 22nd/23rd Street and 63rd Street.

CAPACITY FOR CHANGE

Significant capacity for new growth within 1/2-mile of the FTN+ exists. In this context, there are approximately 10,475 residential lots with a development capacity to support over 42,000 housing units supporting more than 100,000 additional residents and more than 300,000 square feet of retail and services. This can be accomplished through incremental development of single-family, duplex, and small-scale multifamily (4-unit and 6-unit colonnades) to rebuild the pattern and scale of neighborhoods that once supported transit and local daily services.

Reinvesting in the current development capacity of the FTN+ also results in a significant increase in revenue for the city, through taxes. Conservatively, at 60% of Area Median Income, this population growth could result in an estimated $831,000,000 of new buying power[1] in the urban core to help support the economic ecosystem of businesses. A more robust tax base with the potential to generate nearly $30-million in new sales, property, and income tax revenue[2] would also sustain public services, infrastructure, and amenities.

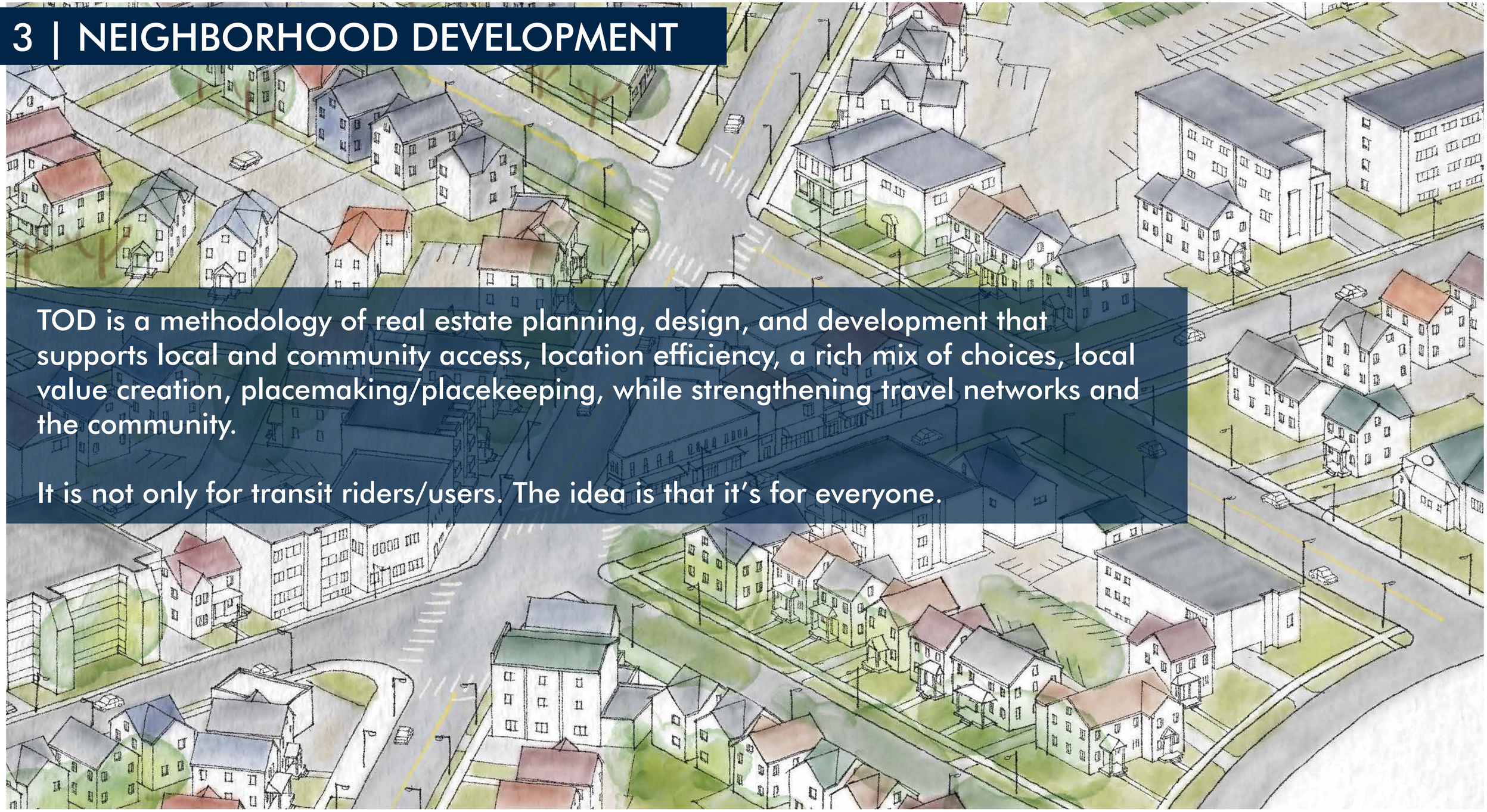
The development capacity currently afforded in the FTN+ provides numerous benefits to the neighborhood and community including but not limited to increased population and activity, increased public revenues, opportunities for affordable housing, repopulation of the school district, and improved provision of goods, services & amenities.

DEFINING A VITAL TRANSIT SYSTEM

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Neighborhoods within the original 1909 boundary of Kansas City are the most TOD-ready places in Kansas City. Originally built around the historic streetcar system, these places are well-positioned to reinforce transit-supportive development patterns - compact, connected, and varied in use, and have established community planning policies that are supportive of TOD. Additionally, the opportunities for revitalization, redevelopment and the creation of value are immense. Transit-oriented development provides the opportunity to create positive change to address access, equity, and wealth-building, while mitigating affordability and displacement of residents and businesses. TOD is the path forward to rebuild the urban core in support of a vital transit system.

3 | NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT



TOD is a methodology of real estate planning, design, and development that supports local and community access, location efficiency, a rich mix of choices, local value creation, placemaking/placekeeping, while strengthening travel networks and the community.

It is not only for transit riders/users. The idea is that it's for everyone.

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)

CREATING TOD NEIGHBORHOODS

Transit-oriented development describes development patterns that are supported by multiple modes of transportation and that make the use of alternatives modes easy and efficient. Transit-oriented neighborhoods exhibit a few basic characteristics that support the places and the people that use it. Transit-oriented neighborhoods are:

- Compact - the efficiency of the development pattern enable walking and transit access.
- Connected - a focus on pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities connects the neighborhood locally and regionally.
- Diverse - a variety of uses - housing, commercial, and amenities support the daily needs of people.

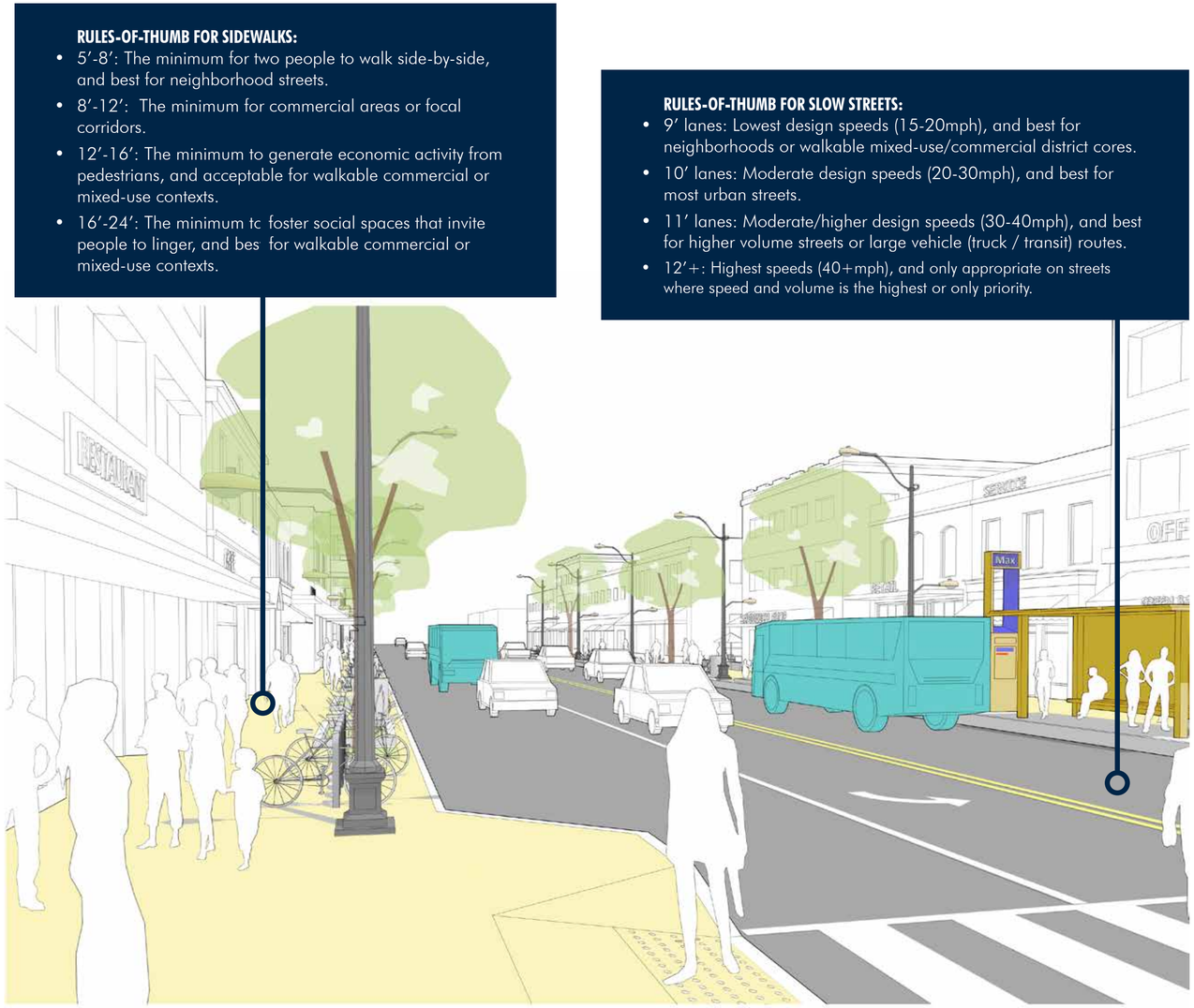
To support the transit-orientation of neighborhoods several best practices are recognized to create the patterns, connectivity, and variety desired. The best practices when used to complement one another result in efficient development patterns supported by multiple, convenient transportation options, each supporting a variety of uses. These practices can be grouped into categories of public space, form, and use. These practices should apply to residential context as well as the commercial/mixed-use context of neighborhoods.

TRANSITY-ORIENTED NEIGHBORHOOD

PUBLIC SPACE

Public space includes streets, open spaces, civic gathering places and the common and private areas that front on these spaces. Public spaces are the platform for people to interact with the city, neighborhoods, destinations, jobs, and daily needs. These spaces shape how we perceive and experience the city, so special attention should be applied when designing them to ensure they are purposed for and scaled to people, rather than automobiles. Generally, the following best practices should be prioritized where applicable in development and public projects in transit-oriented contexts:

- *Promote Connected Networks.* A connected network of streets, blocks and pedestrian passages shorten walking distances, increases the variety of routes, create convenience, and limit or eliminate barriers to walkable places.
- *Slow the Traffic.* Street and lane widths need to balance the desired vehicle speeds, the anticipated traffic volumes, and maximize on-street parking.
  - *Design Slow Neighborhood Streets.* Walkable neighborhoods draw a substantial portion of their value and character from how well the streets and streetscapes are designed. Our most loved neighborhood streets are defined by slow vehicle speeds and are best experienced on foot.
- *Build Generous Sidewalks.* Generous sidewalks signal that walking is a reasonable transportation option and that your public realm is designed for people.
- *Create Comfort and Enclosure with Street Trees.* Street trees are an essential part of infrastructure for walkable streets, due to their aesthetic, spatial, environmental, and social functions. They create value, calm traffic, buffer pedestrians, define spaces, provide shade and comfort, infiltrate stormwater, and protect paved surfaces.
- *Design Active Gathering Places.* Smaller and compact open and civic spaces incorporated into streets or designed as an extension of streetscapes invite people to linger and activate streetscapes. The location, types, and design of different gathering places also help shape the unique identity of different places.



PUBLIC SPACE DESIGN - BEST PRACTICES

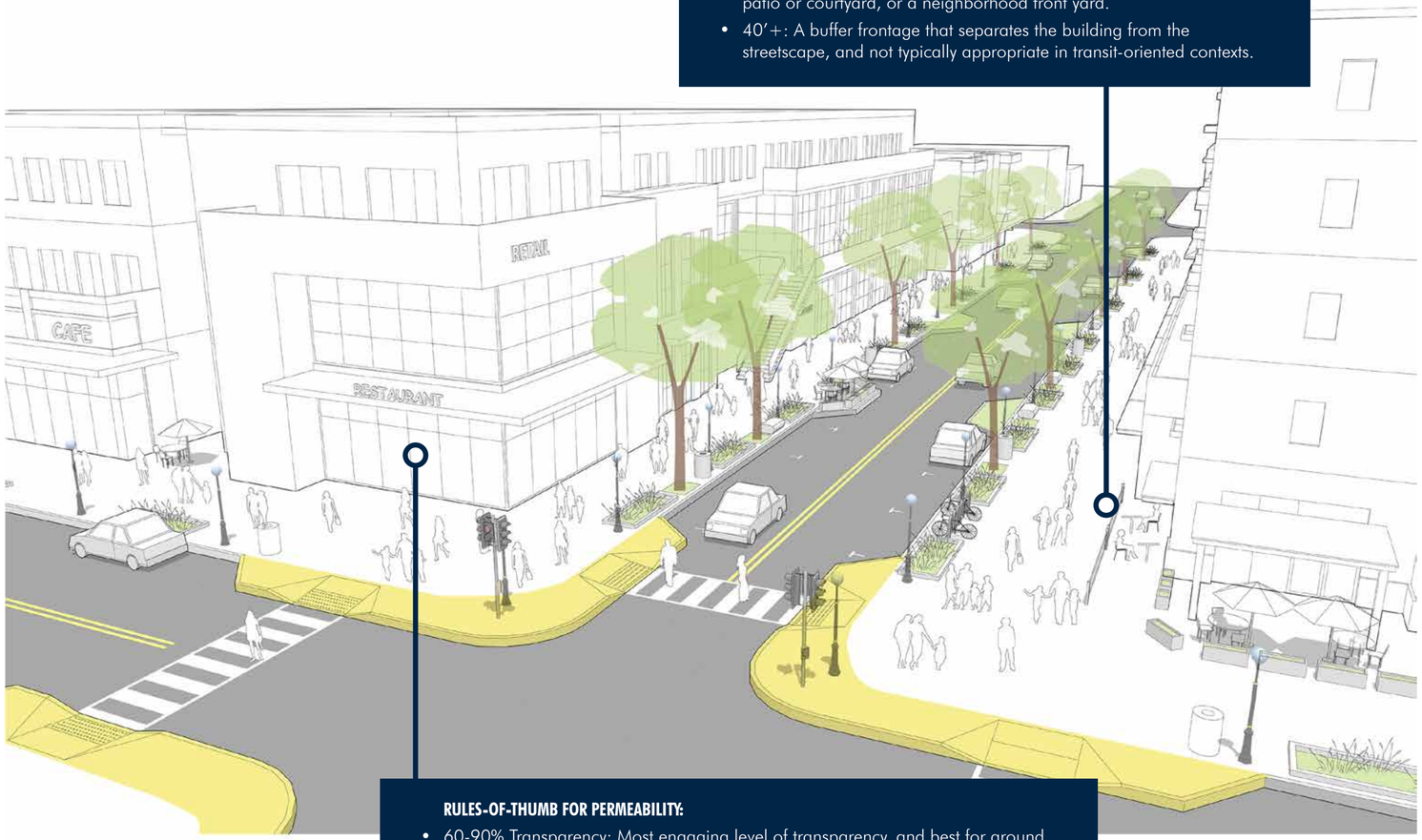
FORM

Urban form is defined by the physical arrangement of buildings and the facilities that service their use. A fine grained and diverse urban form can help foster social spaces, emphasize walkability, support connections to the transit system, and promote a sense of community and place. Generally, the following best practices should be prioritized in development and investments in transit-oriented contexts:

- *Integrate a Variety of Street Types.* Diverse places require a network with a variety of different street types with many different functions and urban design qualities. Some are great people places, others are multi-modal connectors, while others serve basic connectivity and access functions.
- *Engage the Street.* The "street wall" shaped by many buildings and frontage designs define public spaces. Placing buildings close to sidewalks and designing frontages for social space creates enclosure of public spaces and elevates the needs of people over automobiles.
  - *Frontage Design.* The design of the lot frontage to the streetscape contributes to the character of neighborhoods. Managing the extent and frequency of driveways, garages, or parking lots is a crucial strategy for emphasizing walkability over auto-dependency.
  - *Create a Variety of Engaging, Human-scale Entry Features.* Human scale entry features create important physical, social, and perceived connections to the neighborhood. A few simple patterns can create compatibility among a wide range of building types, and subtle variations in those patterns can be a source of unlimited diversity between similar building types.
- *Design Permeable Facades.* Connecting the inside (private realm) to the outside (public realm) is a key attribute of vibrant, walkable places. It creates interest in public space, makes people comfortable, and activates streets.
- *Hide / Minimize the Parking.* Parking should be managed at the largest scale possible and internalized it into blocks and behind buildings at the site scale. While vehicle access and parking may always be necessary to support walkable places, their design and location must avoid disrupting connections and social spaces for people.

RULES-OF-THUMB FOR ENGAGING THE STREET:

- 0'-10' Setback: A typical street front building.
- 10'-25' Setback: Best for terrace frontages, common for rowhouses, small-scale apartments, compact lot houses, and other urban-format housing types.
- 25'-40' Setback: Best for frontages with social spaces, such as a patio or courtyard, or a neighborhood front yard.
- 40'+: A buffer frontage that separates the building from the streetscape, and not typically appropriate in transit-oriented contexts.



PUBLIC SPACE DESIGN - BEST PRACTICES

RULES-OF-THUMB FOR PERMEABILITY:

- 60-90% Transparency: Most engaging level of transparency, and best for ground level of buildings located in mixed-use cores.
- 50-60% Transparency: Moderately engaging level of transparency, and best for ground level of buildings along mixed-use/commercial corridors.
- 25-50% Transparency: Less engaging level of transparency, best for upper levels of buildings, or ground level of buildings in places with less emphasis on walkable destinations.
- <25% Transparency: Disengaging level of transparency, not appropriate for transit-oriented development in most contexts.

USE

Transit oriented development requires a healthy mix of transit-supportive uses, not just "mixed-use" building types, in formats that can be integrated into a complete neighborhood. Generally, the following best practices should be prioritized in development and investments in transit-oriented contexts:

- *Build Capacity.* A critical mass of trip origins (typically households) and destinations (typically services or employment) within walking distance of transit stops and stations creates capacity to support transit.
- *Concentrate Investment.* A variety of different uses concentrated near transit stops and stations supports neighborhoods and districts.
- *Make the Small Easy.* More, smaller investments maintains diversity, adaptability, economic stability, and the ability to integrate many uses in a compact, walkable place.
- *Create Many Reasons to Be There.* Places thrive when there is a variety of reasons to be there, and this principle scales exponentially. A social space with 10 things to do, a block with 10 of these uses, a place with 10 of these blocks –quickly generates your most active and valuable places.
- Promote a Mix of Housing Types. A wide range of housing and building types within a range of compatible building and lot scales allows housing options to transition between neighborhoods, mix within neighborhoods, and integrate along blocks.

KANSAS CITY'S TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT POLICY

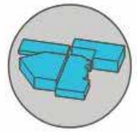
DEVELOPMENT FORM FRAMEWORK

The City of Kansas City, Missouri adopted a comprehensive Transit-Oriented Development Policy in 2017 that provides Ride KC Development Corporation the foundation to implement TOD and support of a vital transit system. The development form framework makes key distinctions between nodes, districts, corridors, and neighborhoods that imply existing and desired future characteristics for development scale, orientation, design, and the public realm. How best practices for transit-oriented will be applied are informed by this framework.

Further, Kansas City has defined a number of typologies for describing transit-oriented development contexts and scales, including Urban Centers, Urban Districts, Urban Communities, Urban Neighborhoods, Suburban Centers, and Town Centers. These places and their application within the city and region will influence KCATA's role in supporting development and the transit system.

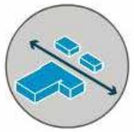
Nodes

Nodes are small, compact areas, typically at major intersections of corridors, that diverge from the surrounding patterns, but due to scale and design complements both the function and character of the area. Nodes generally serve as a center of activity, but can vary in intensity of use and building scale. Nodes are the development form most logically connected to transit stops and stations.



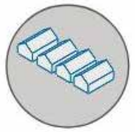
Districts

Districts are regional destinations that are a distinct place — different from surrounding areas through common activities or themes among uses, the intensity of building patterns, and the design characteristics of buildings and civic spaces. Districts typically have a defined "center" and recognized edges or transitions to surrounding areas. Districts are served by transit but, because they often have unique functions or serve as regional destinations, are dense and active for reasons other than transit and mobility alone.



Corridors

Corridors are linear land use patterns typically along major roadways that quickly transition to different patterns — either at nodes or off of side streets (1/2 to 1 block depth of corridor pattern is typical). Corridors are generally residential or mixed-use. Corridors are typically major roadways that connect districts, nodes, and neighborhoods featuring a greater density of commercial and/or residential uses. Corridors follow transit lines and arterials and connect nodes to one another.



Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods are areas for household living featuring primarily residential land uses, but occasionally supported by related civic or institutional uses (parks, community centers, schools, places of worship). There are a variety of neighborhoods that differ primarily by: the mix of building types; the design character of buildings and public spaces; the road patterns; and civic space (parks, boulevards, etc.). Neighborhoods are served by transit, but are more restrictive in the types and intensities of use that they allow.

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT POLICY - KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

KANSAS CITY'S DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Despite Kansas City's adopted policies supporting transit-oriented development, the implementation tools for creating such development are not always supportive. This is specifically true of the current development regulations. The development codes and zoning regulations are the most important tool for creating places and neighborhoods that exhibit the development patterns, scales, and forms that define them, this is especially important for creating transit-oriented development. Generally the current development regulations for Kansas City, Missouri are silent to the specifics design elements necessary to create transit -oriented development, which allows transit-oriented development to occur, but does not encourage it, or ensure its best practices. In some cases, the current zoning regulations directly undermine best practices for transit-oriented development. KCATA is a strong advocate for enabling transit-oriented development and supporting projects of various scales and types, through reforming regulatory standards. In particular those that directly undermine best practices that encourage transit-oriented development practices, and in appropriate context, require those practices.

Specific elements of the current Kansas City, Missouri development regulations that need to be addressed include:

- *Density* - moderate density/intensity of development is difficult to achieve, current density and dimensional development standards either allow too much or too little density for specific contexts.
- *Building types* - current building type applications are ineffective by relying on zoning district standards and density measures.
- *Neighborhood Design* - lacks necessary public spaces (streets) design and building standards to create, and protect, human-scaled, walkable development patterns.
- *Parking* - relies on minimum parking standards lacking contextual application with very few exceptions for transit-oriented or walkable contexts.
- *Procedures* - because the current regulation don't specifically address transit-oriented design elements the process to achieve transit-oriented development can be cumbersome, time consuming, and costly.

Regulatory Tools

Kansas City, Missouri has a few tools to encourage the development of transit-oriented development within the various context of the city. However, many of these tools have not been widely applied in the pursuit of transit-oriented development. The use of these tools could provide a short-term solution to preserve and create walkable, connected places and neighborhoods near transit, as well as long-term solutions to address unique development situations. A challenge with the use of these tools is that each requires a substantial, lengthy, and costly public process to create the entitlements necessary for a specific project or district.

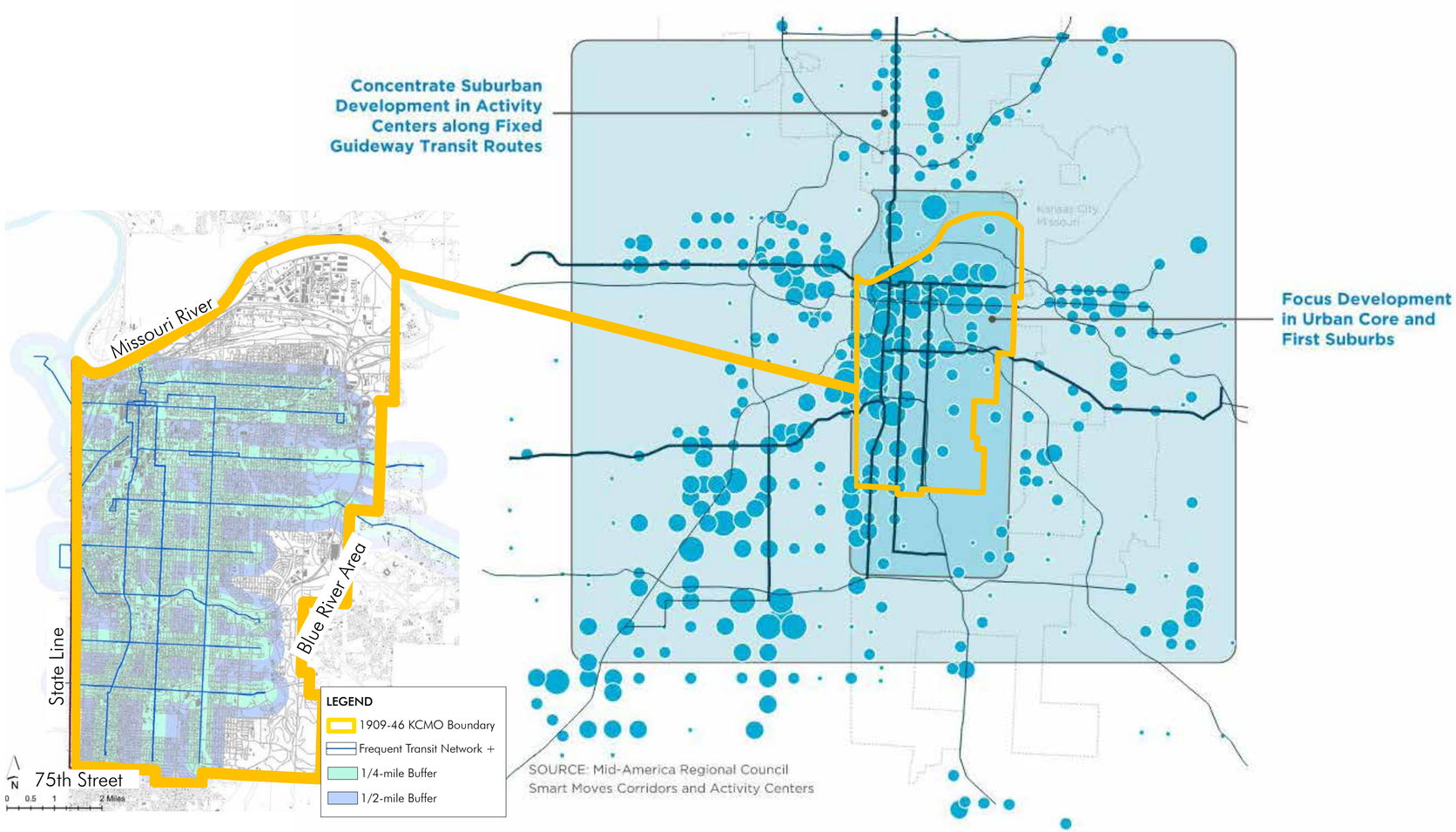
Specific tools within the current Kansas City, Missouri development regulations include:

- **Overlay Districts** - targeted for areas of the city that have unique qualities requiring special treatment or locations where special approaches to development are warranted.
  - *Special Character* - a means for incorporating various development and/or use regulations across a specified area to preserve and promote the historic and/or unique character of neighborhoods, corridors and commercial nodes. Kansas City has established "special character" overlay districts along frequent transit corridors such as Troost Avenue, Main Street, and Independence Avenue.
  - *Pedestrian Oriented* - a pre-established overlay district that is intended to preserve and enhance the character of pedestrian-oriented streets and, in turn, to promote street-level activity, economic vitality, and pedestrian safety and comfort.
- **Special Purpose Districts** - tools for dealing with special situations or accomplishing special planning and zoning goals. (*Unlike overlay districts, special purpose districts are base zoning classifications; they do not over-lay other base zoning districts.*)
  - *Master Plan Development* - a tool to accommodate development that may be difficult if not impossible to carry out under the zoning district standards, specifically targeted to protection of natural resource areas, traditional urban development, mixed-use and mixed housing development.
  - *Urban Redevelopment* - a tool, similar to the MPD, to promote development and redevelopment of underdeveloped and blighted sections of the city and to accommodate flexibility in design. The UR designation is reserved for projects leveraging incentives for undeveloped or blighted sites.

RKCDC PRIORITY AREAS

OUR FOCUS WITHIN THE FREQUENT TRANSIT NETWORK +

The FTN+ described in earlier sections defines a network of frequent transit service and key priority corridors. Areas within 1/4-mile of this network are the most critical priority for RideKC Development Corporation to foster equitable transit-oriented development. Further, RideKC Development Corporation is also committed to supporting areas within 1/2-mile of the FTN+ network, generally aligning with Kansas City's historic 1909-46 boundary. Not only are these existing contexts most appropriate for transit-oriented development, but the city's Area Plans and development policies adopted within these areas are most aligned with the mission and goals of KCATA. KCATA mission is supportive of promoting equity in Kansas City's East Side communities previously harmed through targeted disinvestment, redlining, and other racist practices. KCATA intends to foster a positive impact in these neighborhoods through its partnerships, especially along the Prospect, Troost, and east/west transit corridors.



KCMO TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT POLICY DOCUMENT

Concentrating Investments - by concentrating our urban, suburban, and rural activities around existing or planned transit centers and promoting infill development in areas with existing transit access and other infrastructure.

CASE STUDY: INDEPENDENCE & PROSPECT TRANSIT NODE

BUILDING ON OUR PUBLIC INVESTMENTS

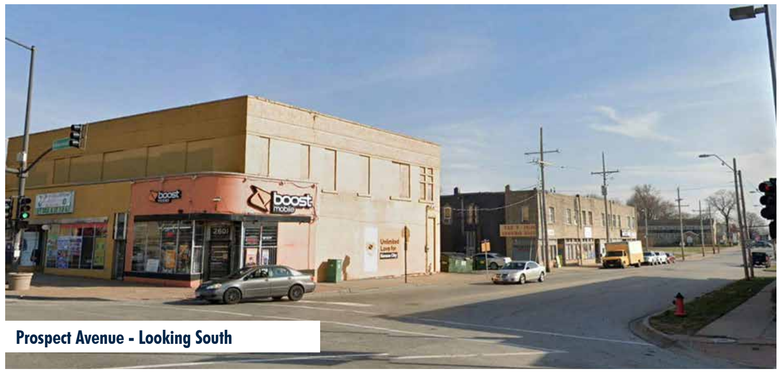
After years of planning and building, Prospect MAX launched in December 2019 and represents a $56 million transportation investment in one of Kansas City's most important east-side corridors. This 10-mile Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) investment, made possible by local and federal funding, has made this corridor safer and more inviting for all, and connects Downtown to the new 75th & Prospect Transit Center at Alphapointe. Further, KCATA has begun a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) study of Independence Avenue. The study will assess transit options between downtown Kansas City to downtown Independence, MO. This 9-mile stretch of Independence Avenue is one of the mostly densely populated and diverse areas in the region. The study is seeking an optimal way to connect these two destinations with a premier BRT service while maintaining some level of local transit service as well. The project potentially could result in the first East-West BRT route in Kansas City. The connection to Downtown Independence would also be the first time service of this caliber would serve an area outside of Kansas City.

These facts, along with KCATA's prioritization of Kansas City's urban core and east-side community, position the intersection of Prospect Avenue and Independence Avenue as an important opportunity to support and help foster an equitable, transit-oriented approach to how redevelopment occurs. The following case study demonstrates best practices for transit-oriented development, and prioritization for returning economic and community value to enhance places where people are, and create areas where people want to be.

CASE STUDY: INDEPENDENCE & PROSPECT TRANSIT NODE

PUBLIC SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

Public spaces provide the framework for any community. The area within 1/4-mile walkshed of the Independence & Prospect intersection hosts an established network of major and minor streets that create a walkable network of blocks. These smaller blocks enable people in nearby neighborhoods greater ease of access to transit, and the goods and services located within the node or district, support by the transit station. Further streetscape improvements for Independence and Prospect are a priority to better support access between home, business and service destinations and the transit system.



Prospect Avenue - Looking South

PROSPECT AVENUE STREETSCAPE

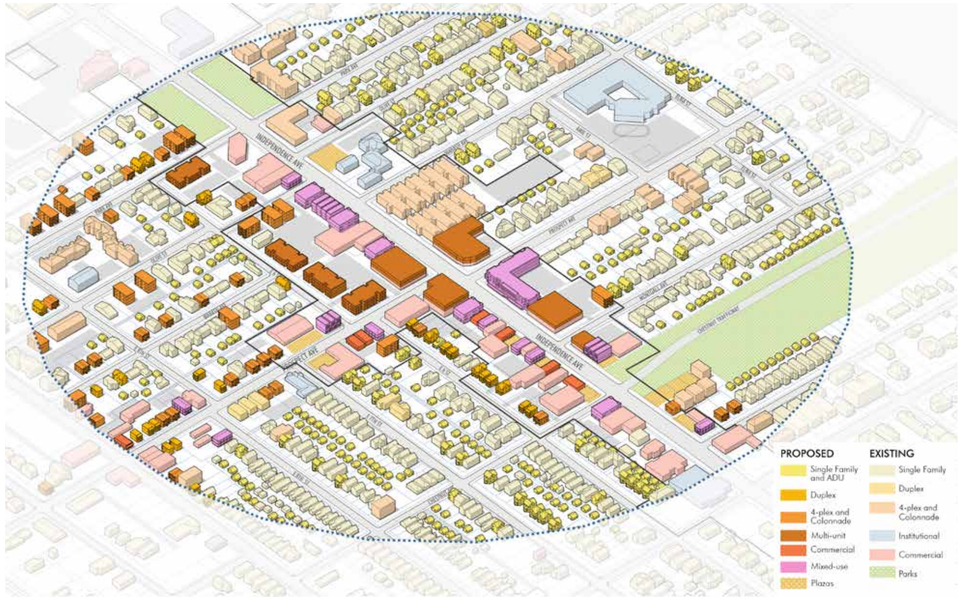
The four-block stretch of Prospect Avenue between Independence Avenue and the nearest Prospect MAX transit node is an important corridor that provides nearby neighborhoods access to two major transit corridors. As such, Prospect Avenue in this area should be improved with facilities that emphasize mobility for people, including improved and expanded sidewalks, reduced travel lanes, traffic-calming measures such as curb bump-outs at corners, enhanced streetscape including street trees, on street-parking, and enhanced crosswalks.

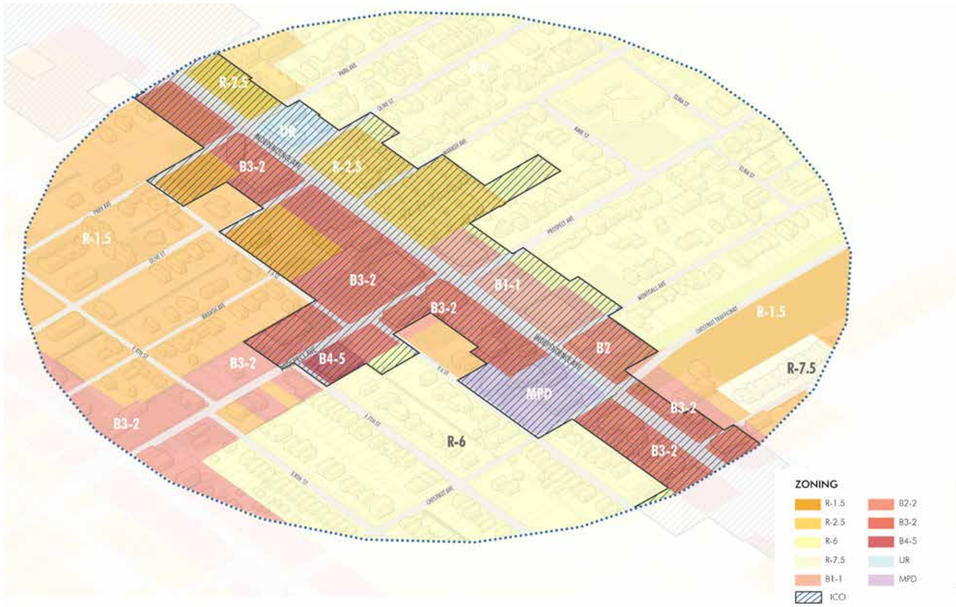
Independence Avenue - Looking West

INDEPENDENCE AVENUE STREETSCAPE

In addition to frequent transit service, investments should be made along Independence Avenue to strengthen multimodal connections and emphasize walkability. Based on the existing context of Independence Avenue, auto-oriented facilities may be deemphasized in favor of people-oriented facilities such as bike lanes, bus stop platforms, on-street parking, enhanced sidewalks, and street trees.

CASE STUDY: INDEPENDENCE & PROSPECT TRANSIT NODE





TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The 1/4-mile walkshed at the Independence & Prospect intersection currently demonstrates the development form framework outlined in Kansas City's Transit-Oriented Development Policy,. The pattern includes a node at the intersection, corridors along Independence Avenue and Prospect Avenue, and adjacent neighborhoods. Future transit-oriented development in this area should reinforce these important patterns and complement the established land use context and mix. The model above shows the current capacity for transit-oriented development under existing regulations within the current context.

INDEPENDENCE CORRIDOR OVERLAY

Property along Independence Avenue currently falls under the Independence Corridor Overlay district, established in 2016. This regulating district establishes allowed uses, lot and building standards, and design standards generally aligned with best practices for transit-oriented development. These regulations also promote greater height at the intersection of Independence and Prospect (node) and along Independence Avenue (corridor). This enables the node and corridor areas to accommodate development that is more compact and mixed-use than surrounding neighborhoods are currently, which are more appropriate for infill and redevelopment of a variety of housing types. Within the Independence Corridor Overlay district, there is currently capacity to build 274 new units of housing.

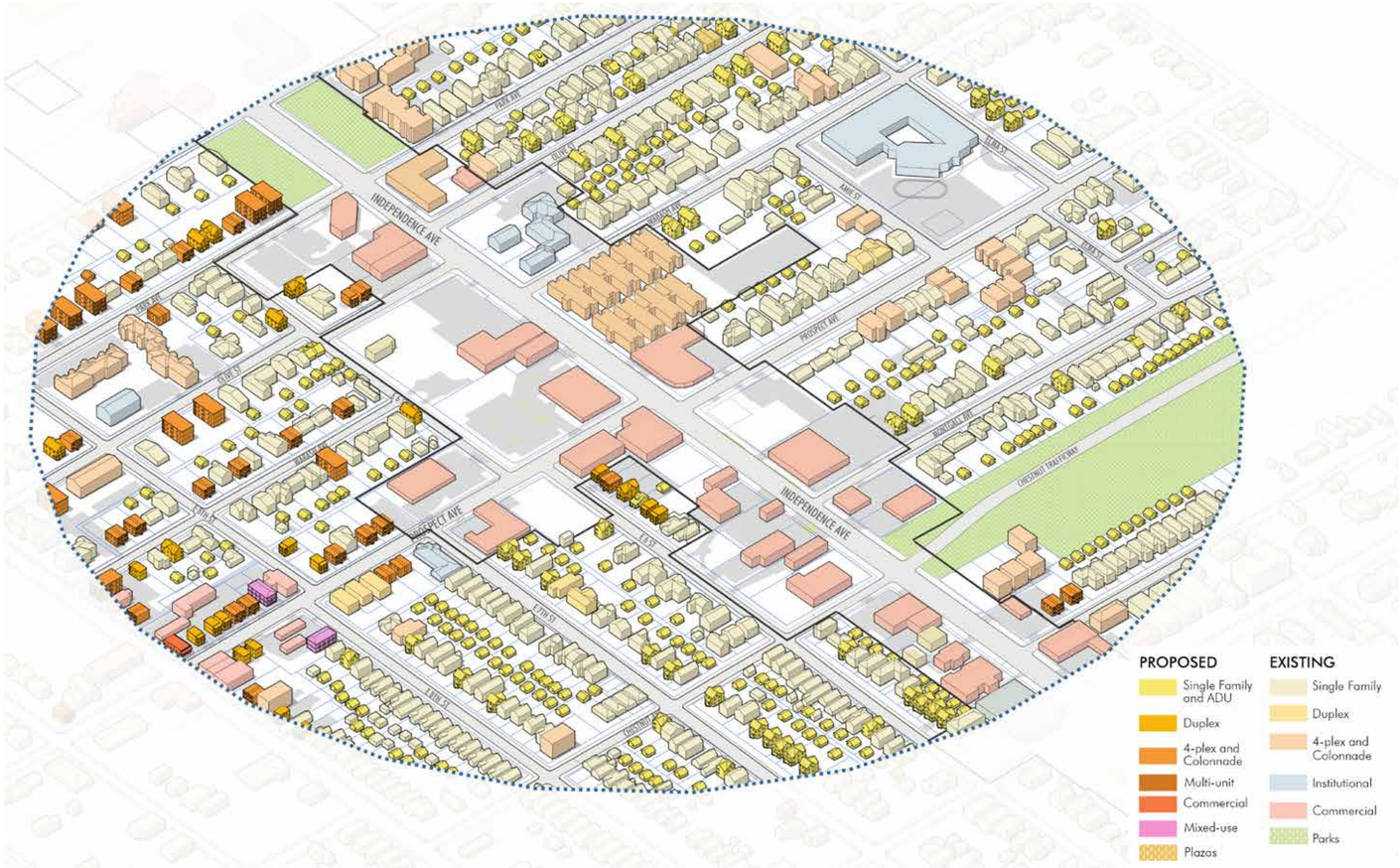
CASE STUDY: INDEPENDENCE & PROSPECT TRANSIT NODE

TRANSIT-ORIENTED NEIGHBORHOODS

The zoning districts for adjacent neighborhoods will influence the type of housing that is provided near frequent transit routes. Neighborhoods located outside the Independence Corridor Overlay district are currently regulated based on residential zoning districts, including R-1.5 (a zoning district appropriate for urban neighborhoods) and R-6 (a zoning district appropriate for suburban neighborhoods). R-1.5 generally enables a variety of "middle" housing types from single-family to duplexes, townhouses, and colonnades. The R-6 district is highly restrictive, and does not allow housing types and patterns other than single-family houses on minimum 6,000 square-foot lots.

In other terms, current zoning would enable neighborhoods within 1/4-mile to build an additional 475 units of housing, which would be a 90% increase in units from the existing 525 units in this area. An equitable, transit-oriented approach to neighborhood development should involve a diversity of housing that is compatible with the existing context, including "middle" housing types, such as duplexes, townhouses, and colonnades.

Partnered with local strategies for maintaining and creating more affordable and attainable housing options, a zero-fare transit system saves families hundreds, even thousands, of dollars each year. Zero-fare transit in Kansas City enables residents to reallocate their budgets to different expenses, including housing, medical, and retail needs. Transit-oriented development eases the financial weight of car-ownership, and empowers Kansas Citians economically.



THE IMPACT OF TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Current zoning enables the area to create up to 743 new units of housing. If the area were to develop to the minimum target density standard for supporting transit of 15 units per acre, the goal should be to build 882 new homes.

The impact of introducing transit-oriented development to this area would be incredibly beneficial. It would not only provide a broad array of housing choices near two far-reaching transit lines, but also attract and support businesses in the area. If the average household income for the area represented 60% of Area Median Income ("AMI"), transit-oriented development would bring an estimated $4.2 million towards spending at businesses, resulting in an estimated $382,300 of new sales tax revenue. Further, transit-oriented development in this area would produce an estimated $371,500 in new earnings tax revenue and $953,400 in new property tax revenue. That's more than $1.7 million of new tax revenue generated by a single area .

A development strategy that is oriented to the frequent transit system not only provides access and mobility to more people, but also would produce the economic vitality Kansas City needs to keep transit fares free, as well as reinvest in infrastructure, public services and programs, schools, neighborhood organizations, and amenities. Transit-oriented communities are built in a manner that bring resources together more efficiently for better outcomes.

NON-TRANSIT-ORIENTED NEIGHBORHOODS

SUPPORT FROM RIDE KC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

A focus on development within the Frequent Transit Network + (FTN+), serving the urban core, will allow KCATA to maximize the community impacts created by transit-oriented development. Development within this established, walkable, connected context will contribute to the creation of a vital, financially resilient transit system. T

Development outside of the FTN+ generally comes with considerable additional costs, both capital and operational. The development patterns in these areas, through their ridership and revenue generation (service and tax), typically do not support the basic investments and operational costs associated with transit, let alone the basic costs of development outside the urban core. The cost associated with transit service grow exponentially the further you get from the urban core, and the return-on-investment - both ridership and property tax revenues (per acre) decrease as well. This formula makes it fiscally unsustainable for KCATA to support development and system expansion outside of the FTN+ service area.

KCATA recognizes the tremendous need for public transit, and is dedicated to creating a vital network that serves the people of the Kansas City Region. However, to create the transit infrastructure necessary to connect people to jobs, services and amenities through out the region it must be a partnership involving public and private investment.

To consider service to outside of the FTN+ network, KCATA will assess requests based on the following information:

- jobs created/supported
- ridership potential
- additional areas / places served/connected
- cost of transit services - capital & operational
- private contributions to support transit service

4 | IMPLEMENTATION PLAYBOOK

Unlike other approaches to supporting development, KCATA are in this together, with the city and region, ensuring that neighborhood needs never take a back seat.

CREATING A VITAL TRANSIT SYSTEM

The KCATA is committed to rebuilding neighborhoods, strengthening connections, and creating a vital transit system. This work must start in the urban core of Kansas City, Missouri, where established transit lines and ridership have been established. A focus that leverages existing transit investments is the right foundation from which to build a vital transit system for the Kansas City region. To do this, KCATA will implement transit-oriented development, as well as support and advocate for changes to improve neighborhoods, connect people to places, and enhance the transit network. KCATA will put their efforts in to enabling transit-oriented development by right through advocating for regulatory changes, and adequately funding the transit system by identifying and securing sustainable funding sources. The specific actions will include:

- transit-oriented development - provide support for planning and development of walkable, connected, and diverse project that support the transit network.
- regulatory changes - advocacy for change to the existing development regulations that do not support transit-oriented development patterns and design.
- sustainable funding for transit - pursuing opportunities and sources for consistent funding of capital and operational transit needs.

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Transit-oriented development is the appropriate method to rebuild neighborhoods and support a robust transit system. Creating compact, connected, and diverse neighborhoods through a focus on the place elements - design of public space and streets, form of development, and mix of uses, will allow the creation of people-centric, context-scaled, unique places that support transit. KCATA will work ensure that future development within the FTN+ network strengthens neighborhoods and is connect to the transit system.

START - SUSTAINING TRANSPORTATION AND REINVESTING TOGETHER

KCATA will prioritize the use of resources to encourage development that creates stability and opportunity, provides value to neighborhoods and community, and is transit-supportive. To guide our support of change we have defined START:

Sustaining - The bold promise of zero fare requires KCATA to develop new ideas that are sustainable over the long term.

Transportation - As the transportation authority of our entire metro, we are on the ground daily in the communities we serve.

Reinvesting - Our goal is to create a cycle of re-investment and equitable growth across the metro where transportation facilitates better development and development facilitates better transportation.

Together - Unlike other approaches to supporting development, KCATA are in this together, with the city and region, ensuring that neighborhood needs never ride at the back of the development

To assess projects and the value they can add to the community, the START Checklist will be used to assess the design, land use, and community & equity components of proposed development. The checklist will be use to review and evaluate housing, commercial, and mixed-use development within the FTN+ network area, for their potential impacts to the adjacent neighborhoods.

START Checklist

Design

When considering the overall design, we ask questions like these:

- Are the buildings oriented to the primary street with minimal setbacks from the sidewalk?
- Can the ground floor be used to make the building more “active,” such as retail, office, or small-scale, light manufacturing?
- Can the buildings increase transparency and add vitality through taller ground floor and large windows?
- Are there big blank walls where people will be walking?
- If the building is immediately next to waiting areas for transit, are there features that provide rider comfort?
- Are the building entrances visible and easy to recognize from the street?
- Is the design friendly to people? Is there shade? Public art? Are dumpsters hidden? Are there Seating areas? Is it noisy? Easy wayfinding?
- Does the design of the buildings make people feel small and unimportant, or do they create a sense of place that values people?

Land Use

How the land is used makes a big difference, but the simple question is this:
Is this better for cars or people?

- Can we reduce parking ratios, add district and shared parking?
- Is there a limited amount of curb cuts?
- Does the development add diverse uses, including types of housing, to the corridor and encourage daily activity?
- Has the design made it easier to walk than drive?
- If parking structures are required, are they out of sight, and well-lit for wayfinding and security?
- Can the parking structures be converted to other uses easily in the future?

Community & Equity

To make the most of the development, community involvement is critical.

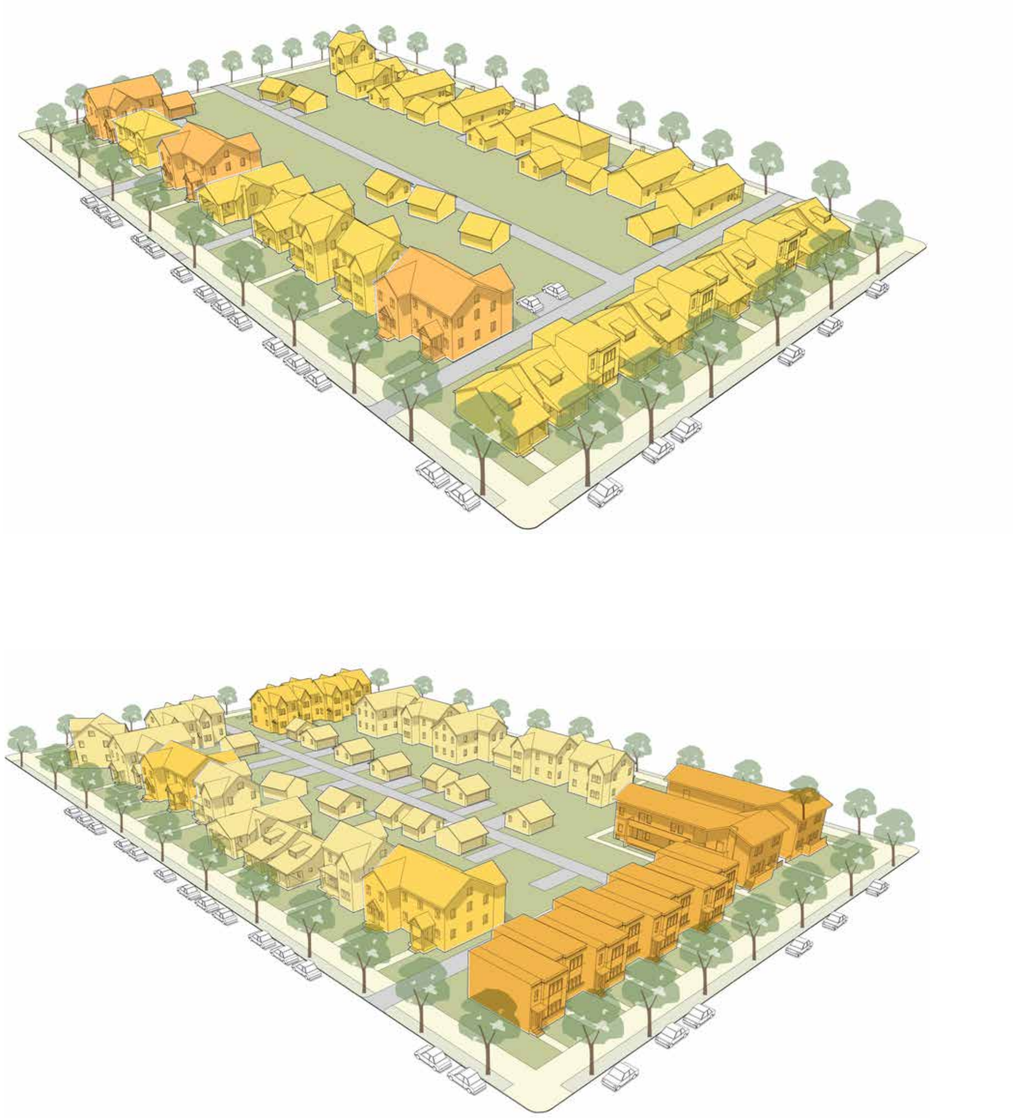
- Has the community been engaged in this design process? And does the project align with any/all established plans?
- Have underrepresented groups been involved in the process?
- Have multiple types of public transportation (not just busses) been incorporated into the site design?
- Is pedestrian safety prioritized over traffic flow?
- Does the development provide the type of housing the community needs?

REGULATION REFORM

To ensure the implementation of transit-oriented development KCATA will be an advocate for changes to the current development standards. Changes are necessary to allow transit-oriented development to occur by-right and encourage infill/redevelopment/ development to occur in a manner that creates and preserves compact, connected, and diverse neighborhoods and places. Many of these places were originally supported by transit and the framework of those development patterns and practices remain.

Specific actions necessary to modify the Kansas City, Missouri development regulations to support transit-oriented development include:

- *Housing Variety* - align development standards to enable moderate density, middle-scaled housing to occur in appropriate contexts - remove barriers to ADUs, allow small-lot housing, small-scale multifamily, and preserve the existing housing stock to expand affordability.
- *Building Types* - redefine the building types to create clear, consistent, neighborhood scaled standards, by-right.
- *Neighborhood Design* - define frontages - addressing front facades, driveway widths, and entry features to preserve and create walkable connected public spaces, including streets.
- *Parking* - deregulate parking near the FTN, and reduce/remove parking barriers - on-street parking contribution, bike and scooter parking allowances, etc..
- *Procedures* - enable transit-oriented development patterns, types, scales, and use mixes to occur by-right, and when approvals are necessary, streamline the process.
  - Overlay / Special Districts - the future use of these tools should be to address unique circumstances that have not been addressed through changes to the base zoning regulations.



NEIGHBORHOOD-SCALED HOUSING VARIETY

SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

In 1966 through a “bi-state compact” the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) was approved by Congress. The agency was given broad powers and a mission to “connect people to opportunities through transportation.” Since 1969 the KCATA has been providing the Kansas City region public transportation service, and until the recent addition of the Streetcar, solely in the form of bus service. During much of this time, the operations of the KCATA were supported exclusively by federal funding allocated on an annual basis, two Kansas City, Missouri sales tax measures, and a modest amount of revenue recovered from the transit fare box. The public transit system has always existed upon non-dedicated sources.

While the last 53 years have focused on running a bus system, more recent actions, like the formation of RKCDC, a Missouri nonprofit and federally recognized 501(c)(3) organization, are striving to vastly expand upon transit-oriented development, in an effort to more dynamically implement KCATA’s mission. To this end, further research, investigation, and financial modeling needs to be undertaken, to identify sustainable funding sources to stabilize KCATA’s operational, programming, and capital needs. Rebuilding transit-oriented neighborhoods, and the local and community value created, is the first step. What is next?

Through the broad powers of the bi-state compact, KCATA and RKCDC (in which KCATA is the sole member) can own, lease, and develop property; build (subject to local regulations), sell, and lease back facilities; accept property donations; finance, levee taxes (through the formation of a Transportation Development District or similar state special assessment); receive impact fees and other contributions or and fees in-lieu, and earn fees through taxable and tax-exempt conduit bond issuances for transportation development. Any one of these actions would contribute to funding the KCATA needs and are candidates to also support RKCDC, its implementation partner. However, these sources are somewhat transaction-dependent, and may not be sustainable for the life of the KCATA’s passenger transportation system.

Thus, identifying creative solutions for additional sustainable funding methods is imperative. Such sources might include, value capture strategies and mill levy classifications for transportation. Value capture strategies are public financing tools that recover a share of the value transit creates. Examples of value capture strategies used for transit include: tax increment financing, joint development through public/private partnerships, building permit fees for project supported by transit. Perhaps the most readily available candidate for value capture would be to secure a portion of the property value increment created because of the presence of transit. The most sustainable funding sources available would be to add KCATA as a taxing district recipient within the mill levies from the counties (Missouri & Kansas) that are served by the KCATA. A mill levy could generate a continuous revenue stream to support the capital, operational, maintenance, and growth of the passenger transportation system.

SUSTAINING A VITAL TRANSIT SYSTEM

RIDEKC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

KCATA is committed to creating a vital transit network to connect people to opportunities. To support their mission, KCATA will leverage the current transit investments to rebuild neighborhoods, through transit-oriented development and funding opportunities to sustain the transit network. Now is the time to act to advance Kansas City.

For more information please visit: https://www.kcata.org