



ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS STATEMENT

Roosevelt Station
Transit-Oriented Community

Prepared by GGLO
For the Roosevelt Development Group

February 2011



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The content of this document flows from general, to regional, to local. It begins with a definition of TOC and its broad range of inherent benefits, along with focused reviews of economics, climate change, density, and TOC performance measures. This is followed by discussions of TOC in the context of the central Puget Sound region, in the context of the City of Seattle, and lastly, in the context of the Roosevelt neighborhood. The document concludes with a presentation of RDG's development opportunities, and the potential benefits such development could provide to the neighborhood, city, and region.

SUMMARY

For the past three years, the Roosevelt Development Group (RDG) has been exploring mixed-use residential development opportunities on multiple properties in the Roosevelt neighborhood, all located within a short walk of five minutes or less from the planned light rail station. Current zoning on most of these properties not only strains the near-term financial feasibility of development, but it also limits the number of new jobs and households with walkable access to this high-capacity transit station area. The time is now for a new vision.

This document presents a discussion of the potential benefits offered by redevelopment in the Roosevelt neighborhood center. Because Roosevelt is the future site of a Sound Transit Link light rail station, bringing new people and jobs to the neighborhood is a key strategy for achieving regional sustainability and maximizing return on public investment in transit. At the same time, the creation of a transit-oriented community in the heart of Roosevelt has the potential to make the neighborhood a more livable, equitable, and vibrant place for local residents and business owners alike.

Transit-oriented communities (TOC) are widely recognized as an unparalleled solution for accommodating growth in a sustainable manner, while also providing the kind of compact, walkable neighborhoods that are increasingly desired by today's evolving demographic. In Roosevelt, as in TOC across the country, this kind of "win-win" is dependent on enabling sufficient numbers of households and jobs to locate near the light rail station. And this will require responsible planning and responsive development.

Change is a challenge for any community, but when approached positively, change is also an opportunity. It is the intention of this document to help residents and stakeholders understand all that could be gained, such that the wisest choices can be made on these vital, 100-year decisions.



Roosevelt Development Group (RDG) is committed to the responsible development of lasting and high-quality urban real estate projects. RDG projects are grounded in careful consideration of the specific character of the site and needs of the community. RDG strongly believes that a thoughtfully designed transit-oriented community in the Roosevelt neighborhood will enhance quality of life for current and future residents within the immediate community, while at the same time promoting sustainability across the greater Seattle region.

A public open space provides vital breathing room at Burien Town Square, a new transit-oriented community in Burien, WA.

WHAT ARE TRANSIT-ORIENTED COMMUNITIES?

Transit-oriented communities (TOC) are defined as compact, mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods that offer a diversity of housing and easy access to high-quality transit. TOC provide convenient access to housing, jobs, services, and recreation without reliance on cars, thereby lowering cost of living, improving quality of life, and promoting long-term sustainability.

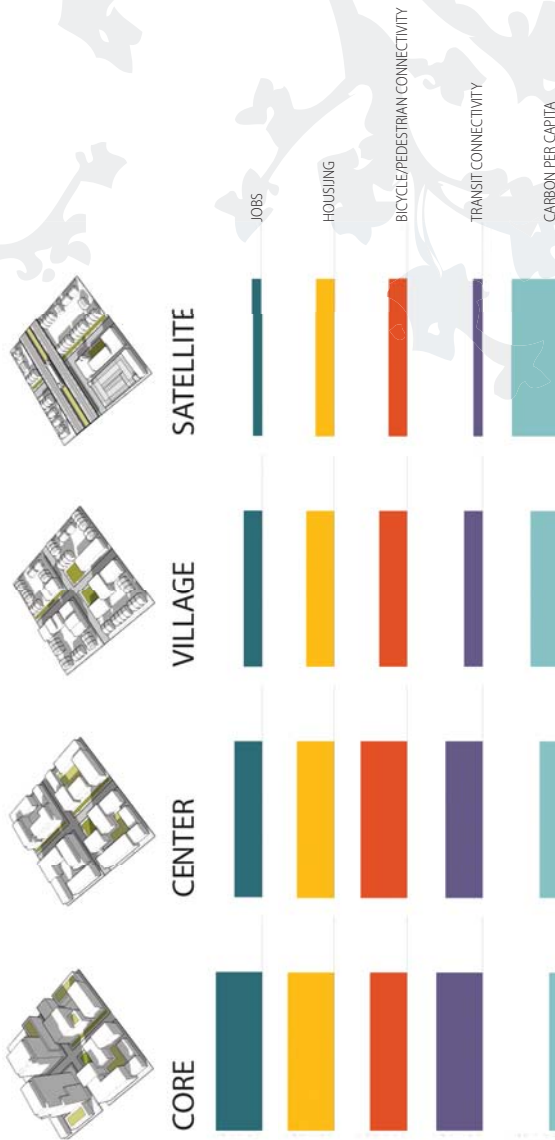
The most fundamental characteristic of TOC is the presence of a critical mass of housing and jobs in close proximity to high-capacity transit. A concentration of active origins and destinations focused around a transit station enables a synergistic combination of walkable access, thriving retail, high transit ridership, and reduced dependence on private autos.

While all TOC share a set of defining, core attributes, the character of the neighborhoods they encompass can vary widely. The “station area” around a high-capacity transit station is typically defined by a half-mile radius, which may enclose several distinct neighborhoods, topographies, and a range of zoning and development patterns. To more effectively evaluate the potential of specific station areas, it is constructive to classify station areas by type.

The diagram to the left presents the station area typology established in “Transit-Oriented Communities: Blueprint for Washington State” (see note below). The typology uses the attributes of existing infrastructure, land use, and zoning to classify four station area types, arranged in order of development intensity: Core, Center, Village, and Commuter. The matrix diagram illustrates how measures of the essential attributes of TOC diminish when moving from higher to lower development intensity. Accordingly, one can expect Core stations to have the highest potential for maximizing the full benefits of TOC, followed by the Center, Village and Commuter station types.

Because the Roosevelt neighborhood is the site of a future Sound Transit Link Light Rail station, it ranks among the best opportunities for creating TOC in the Pacific Northwest. As it exists today, the Roosevelt station area is the “Village” type. However, as will be discussed throughout this document, realizing the full potential of TOC at Roosevelt calls for significant intensification of development.

There has been a wealth of published research demonstrating that TOC are a vital ingredient of sustainable cities. The potential benefits that TOC can provide can be divided into social and environmental, as summarized on the facing page.



Every station area is unique, performing differently depending on its location, physical assets, community, and regulatory framework.

Image Credit: GGLO

In 2009 **GGLO**, in partnership with the advocacy organizations **Futurewise** and **Transportation Choices Coalition**, published a 76-page report entitled “**Transit-Oriented Communities: A Blueprint for Washington State.**” The report is an advocacy manual that provides, information, guidance, and inspiration to help promote exemplary TOC in cities throughout the Puget Sound Region. This Environmental Benefits Statement draws heavily from the concepts and information presented in the TOC Blueprint report.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Habitat and Farmland Preservation:

Compared to sprawl, the compact development characteristic of TOC consumes less land for buildings and roadways, thereby alleviating development pressure on farms and forests, and reducing impacts on natural systems.

Improved Water Quality:

Compact development also reduces impervious surface (on a per capita basis), which helps mitigate stormwater runoff and reduce the delivery of toxic chemicals to local water bodies. Less driving also means less runoff pollution from streets.

Reduction of Energy Use and Greenhouse Gases:

The most significant environmental benefit associated with TOC is reductions in fossil fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions that result from less driving (see page 7 for more on this topic). TOC also has the potential to cut energy use and GHG emissions from buildings by capitalizing on the inherent efficiency of multifamily buildings.



Transit-oriented communities support ecological stewardship by enabling sustainable urban development that preserves invaluable habitat and farmland, protects water quality in Puget Sound, and reduces climate change impact.

Photo: Dan Bertolet

SOCIAL BENEFITS

Improved Health:

TOC encourage walking and biking instead of driving, thereby promoting routine exercise. Less driving also means fewer injuries in auto accidents, and reductions in harmful air pollution.

Lower Household Transportation Costs:

Proximity of services and access to convenient transit allows residents to reduce transportation expenses by taking fewer trips by car, or by choosing to not own a car.

More Housing Options:

Demographic and cultural shifts are creating a growing demand for housing in walkable neighborhoods. TOC can help meet this demand and in doing so help preserve affordability.

Reduced Municipal Infrastructure Costs:

As communities become more compact, the per capita cost of infrastructure is reduced, simply because there is less area to cover. Infrastructure to serve low-density development can cost as much as \$90,000 per home.

Enhanced Social Capital:

Multiple studies suggest that compact, walkable communities reinforce a variety of factors that help generate social capital.

High Return on Public Investment:

Investment in public transportation combined with adequate development typically yields an estimated fourfold economic return to the greater community, and substantially increases surrounding property values.



TOC AND ECONOMICS

The creation of TOC can yield a range of positive contributions to regional, local, and household economies. First and foremost, the production of housing in compact, mixed-use, transit-rich neighborhoods has unmatched potential to stimulate the economy by delivering a high-value, under supplied housing product to the market. Analysts such as Christopher Leinberger have demonstrated that evolving demographics are creating a burgeoning demand for “walkable urbanism” that could fuel the engine for nationwide economic recovery, and furthermore, that fixed-rail transit is an essential catalyst for such development.

At the local level, creating TOC would not only provide jobs, but would also would strengthen Seattle’s expertise in designing and constructing the kind of sustainable built environment that will be increasingly desired nationwide—expertise that could be exported, further bolstering Seattle’s economic health.

At the district scale, the new residents and jobs that come with compact, mixed-used development can be expected to breathe new life into neighborhood commercial centers. Existing businesses will see their client base expand, while new businesses will create jobs and contribute to the overall neighborhood vitality from which all businesses benefit.

At the household level, TOC can significantly reduce living expenses by providing cheaper alternatives to driving. Nationwide research consistently shows that residents of TOC drive less and own fewer cars, which translates into significant savings in transportation costs. The American Public Transit Association estimates that the average annual cost of owning a car in Seattle is \$11,185.

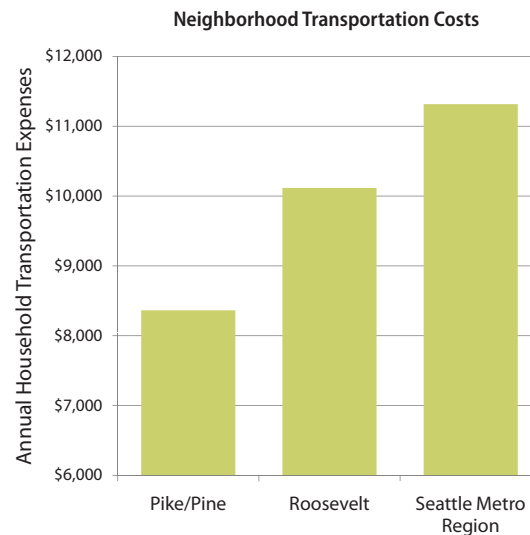
TRANSPORTATION AND AFFORDABILITY

The Chicago-based Center for Neighborhood Technology has developed a metric called the Housing+Transportation Affordability Index that includes the cost of transportation in assessments of affordability. Transportation expenses are estimated by a model that predicts household vehicle miles traveled based on characteristics of the built environment, including density, block size, and transit level of service.

On average, U.S. households in auto-dependent suburban neighborhoods spend 24 percent of their income on transportation, while those in walkable, transit-rich neighborhoods spend 12 percent. For a local example, see the chart to the right. The model predicts that compared to the average in the Seattle metro region, the typical household living in Seattle’s Pike/Pine neighborhood spends about \$3,000 less per year on transportation.

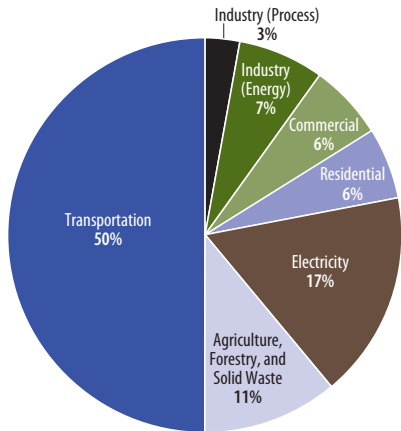
These savings arise from the reduced driving that is characteristic of neighborhoods with higher densities and good transit access.

Less spent on transportation translates to a reduction in the total cost of living, which effectively increases affordability in TOC. For example, the expense of owning one car is typically equivalent to roughly \$100,000 worth of mortgage. As with any new market rate construction, maintaining affordable housing in TOC can be a challenge. But the savings on transportation associated with TOC can go a long way towards keeping total living expenses within the means of lower income households.



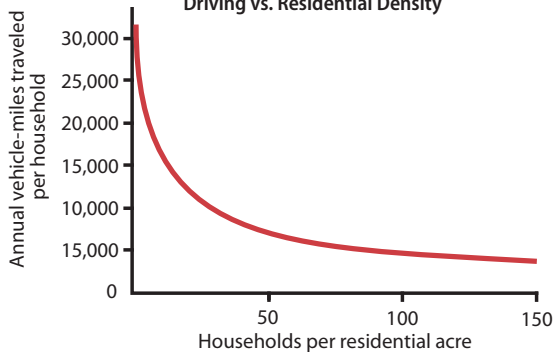
The chart above presents estimated annual household transportation costs for two neighborhoods in Seattle and the Seattle-Bellevue-Everett metro region, based on a model developed by the Center for Neighborhood Technology. The Pike/Pine neighborhood has higher residential density and more transit access than Roosevelt, and that difference is manifested in lower transportation expenses, because people drive less. Source: <http://htaindex.cnt.org>.

Sources of GHG Emissions in the Central Puget Sound Region



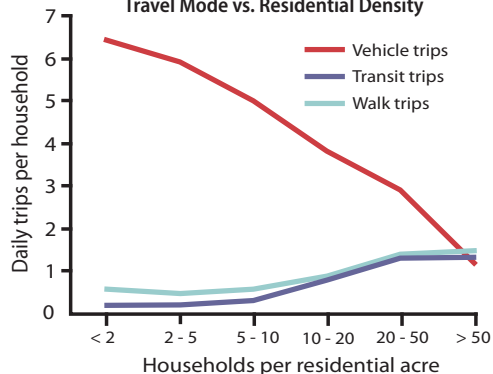
Source: Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (2000)

Driving vs. Residential Density



Source: John Holtzclaw et al., "Location Efficiency: Neighborhood and Socioeconomic Characteristics Determine Auto Ownership and Use," (2002)

Travel Mode vs. Residential Density



Source: John Holtzclaw, Metropolitan Transportation Commission, "1990 Household Travel Survey" (1997)

TOC AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is the defining environmental challenge of our times. In the Puget Sound region, road transportation is the single largest source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as shown in the adjacent pie chart. Any realistic plan to reduce climate impacts must focus on providing practical alternatives to cars, and it is widely recognized that creating TOC is our most promising long term strategy for achieving that end.

Numerous studies have shown that the land use patterns typical of TOC can result in significant reductions in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in cars, which translates directly to cuts in GHG emissions. A 2010 study by the Center for Neighborhood Technology found "GHG reductions of 43 percent for households living in compact, mixed-use neighborhoods near stations, and 78 percent reductions for households living in central business districts."

In particular, a strong relationship between density and driving has been observed in cities all over the world, as illustrated in the adjacent graph of vehicle miles traveled and density. A parallel effect is observed with travel mode--as density increases, walking and transit trips replace car trips, as shown in the bottom graph on the left. Several other characteristics of TOC have also been correlated with reductions in GHGs, including job density, street connectivity, a mix of uses, and proximity to transit.

SEATTLE'S CLIMATE GOALS AND POLICY

In 2010, the Seattle City Council made the goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 one of the year's official priorities. In previous years, the City has also adopted a range of goals and policies that recognize the important role that transit-oriented communities can play in addressing climate change, including:

The 2006 *Seattle Climate Action Plan* recommends expanding "efforts to create compact, green urban neighborhoods."

The 2009 *Climate Protection Initiative Progress Report* states, "The combined challenges of accommodating growth and stopping climate change mean we need to provide people with real alternatives to driving."

The 2008 report *Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change* states, "...density-promoting measures may be appropriate. Early targets could include neighborhoods just outside of downtown... and within the urban villages."

A 2007 City ordinance established the goal to "reduce emissions of... climate changing greenhouse gases in Seattle to 30% of 1990 levels by 2024, and by 80% of 1990 levels by 2050." Recommendations include "Promote densities, mixes of uses, and transportation improvements that support walking, and use of public transportation."

SDOT's *Strategic Plan* states, "SDOT is in the midst of shifting focus from an auto-oriented approach to one that emphasizes walking, biking, and taking transit. Increasing travel choices is good for people and helps protect the planet from the harmful impacts of climate change."





Sound Transit's expanding Link light rail system is setting up some of the region's best opportunities for high-performing transit-oriented communities



ASSESSING TOC

The "performance" of a TOC can be gauged by the degree to which it maximizes housing and transportation choices that give residents access to homes, jobs, recreation, and services to meet their daily needs without relying on a car. In order to better inform both design and policy, the TOC Blueprint report proposed the set of performance measures summarized below. These measures are designed to be assessed across the area enclosed by a half-mile radius around the transit station.

In general, the more of these performance goals a station area can meet the better, with the caveat that not all station areas can or should be expected to meet all of the criteria. For Roosevelt, the measures below should be interpreted with the consideration that the station area is a "Village" type (see page 4), and as such, cannot be expected to accommodate the levels of density appropriate for the more intensely developed station area types.

SEVEN TOC PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Residential density: This is the most important measure, because the number of people living near the transit station is the chief determinant of ridership. *Goal: 15,000 housing units (average gross density of 30 units per acre).*

Mix of uses: A complete community requires of a balanced range of uses, and in particular, employment should not supplant housing. *Goal: At least one housing unit for each employment unit.*

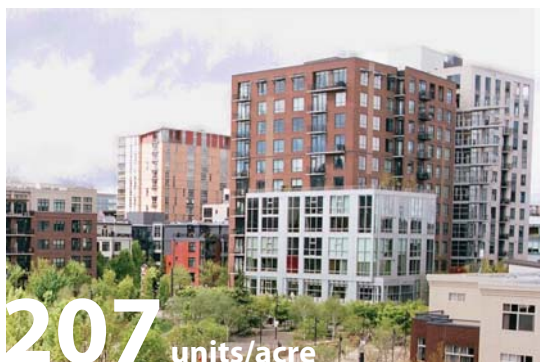
Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity: Station area infrastructure should facilitate non-motorized transportation modes. *Goals: High street network density; "complete streets" for all modes and abilities.*

Housing affordability: The affordable access provided by transit should be available to all incomes. *Goal: 25% of housing units affordable to households earning 80% of area median income (AMI); 10% of housing units affordable to households earning 50% of AMI.*

Open space and green infrastructure: Preserving livability at higher densities requires ample open space and recreational areas, and ideally these amenities should strengthen the functioning of natural systems. *Goals: Planning and funding for open space; low-impact development to minimize stormwater runoff.*

Parking: Excess surface parking compromises urban design and degrades the pedestrian realm. *Goals: Eliminate parking minimums; establish parking maximums where appropriate; prohibit surface parking lots.*

Urban design: Thoughtfully designed buildings, streetscapes, and public spaces are essential for livable neighborhoods and preserving local character. *Goal: Establish community-created design guidelines and standards for buildings and the public realm.*



DENSITY AND LIVABILITY

Sufficient density is the single most critical ingredient of high performing TOC. Unfortunately, density is also a controversial and widely misunderstood concept. With careful design and planning, the densities that are appropriate for TOC can create a highly livable urban environment for all ages and incomes.

Density

Density is expressed in one of two distinct flavors: **gross**, and **net**. Gross density is the number of units divided by the total land area. Net density is the number of units divided by the development parcel area only (i.e. not including the right-of-way), and is the metric commonly used for individual buildings.

The Roosevelt quarter-mile radius station area currently has a gross density of about 7 housing units/acre, and an average net density of about 11 units/acre. In the context of a high-capacity transit station, this is a relatively low density, which reflects the prevalence of low-rise and single family uses. If single family uses are to be preserved, then achieving densities approaching the goal for high performing TOC (see page 8) will require significant redevelopment in the commercial core.

Buildings with a range of **net** densities are illustrated on the left side of the page. As can be seen, relatively high net density can be achieved in a mid-rise building. Note, however, that because it is the average density across the entire station that matters, numerous buildings with densities significantly higher than the overall goal would be necessary to compensate for low density buildings outside the core.

Livability

A common misperception is that as density rises, urban livability inherently declines. The reality is that compared to low-density auto-dependent development, compact, walkable urban environments have the potential to offer a better quality of life for a greater portion of the population.

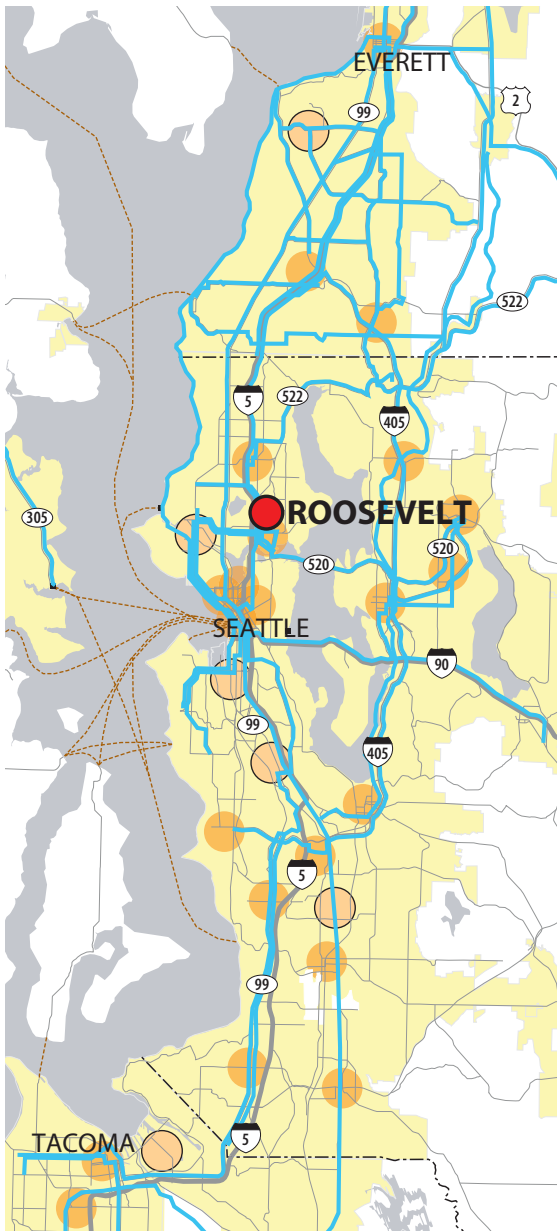
For the 37 percent of the general population who can't or don't drive, walkable, transit-rich neighborhoods provide convenient access to daily needs, and freedom from reliance on someone else's car. For lower-income people, such neighborhoods enable a car-free lifestyle, which significantly reduces household expenses and effectively makes housing more affordable (see page 6).

The key factor in creating dense, livable neighborhoods is a high quality public realm -- the parks and plazas that provide places to gather and relax, as well as the streetscapes that furnish the backdrop for everyday life. Maintaining a high-quality public realm requires the thoughtful collaboration of local government and developers. For example, it can often be a win-win to grant developers allowances for increased density in exchange for open space enhancements.

Aspirations for livable density are grounded in the belief that people are an asset, not a liability, and that density done right enhances business, reduces crime, increases equity, promotes health, strengthens community, and enables a high quality of life overall.



Regional Transit Plan for 2040



TRANSPORTATION 2040 PLAN*

- RAPID TRANSIT (RAIL & BRT) ———
- FERRY - - - - -
- STATE HIGHWAY ———
- URBAN GROWTH AREA ———
- REGIONAL GROWTH CENTER ———
- MANUFACTURING/INDUSTRIAL CENTER ———

*Puget Sound Regional Council

THE REGIONAL CONTEXT

The central Puget Sound region faces the parallel, compound challenges of **accommodating population growth, preserving livability, and reducing environmental impacts**. It is widely recognized that the creation of TOC is among the most promising strategies for synergistically addressing each of those challenges. But because the region's urban areas have a relatively low population density as well as an auto-centric transportation system, creating high performing TOC will necessitate significant redevelopment of the existing urban fabric.

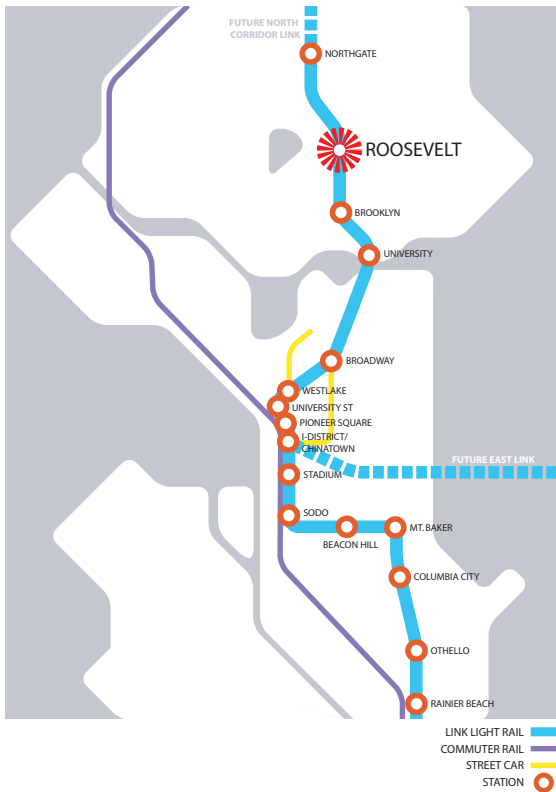
The first necessary ingredient of TOC is, of course, high-capacity transit. In 2008 voters approved \$11.8 billion in funding to extend Sound Transit's Link light rail system north to Lynnwood, east to Redmond, and south to Federal Way. Other significant regional transit systems include Sounder commuter rail and multiple bus rapid transit lines. The Puget Sound Regional Council's projections for rapid transit in the year 2040 are illustrated in the map to the left.

These transit investments will enable the region's best opportunities for sustainable growth. And that growth will be substantial — **the central Puget Sound region is projected to grow by 1.7 million people and 1.2 million jobs by 2040**. Channeling new households and jobs to neighborhoods in close proximity to existing or planned high-capacity transit will both maximize the return on our public investment, and minimize the environmental footprint of development. And every station in the regional transit system plays an essential synergistic role in maximizing the efficiency of the system as a whole, because the various uses located in each station area can be both origins and destinations for transit trips.

State, regional, and local governments can each help facilitate the compact, mixed-use development in station areas that form the basic building blocks of TOC. So far, the State of Washington has taken no significant actions toward this end. The Puget Sound Regional Council was recently awarded a \$5 million grant from the HUD/FTA/EPA Sustainable Communities Initiative that will fund regional planning for TOC.

At the local level, the region's best example of planning for TOC is in the Bel-Red corridor in Bellevue. Through a four-year process the City produced a plan that includes rezones, design guidelines, vision plans, and incentives for affordable housing, open space, and stream restoration. **The City expects to spend upwards of \$500 million on infrastructure and amenities** funded through a combination of federal, state, and local sources, and revenue collected through impact fees, local improvement districts, and fees for development bonuses.

Seattle's High Capacity Transit Stations



The map above identifies existing and planned stations on Sound Transit's Link light rail line in Seattle. These sites--in particular those located outside of downtown Seattle--represent the City's most promising opportunities for creating transit-oriented communities. Roosevelt station, marked in red, will be a key high-capacity transit access point for north Seattle.

Image: GGLO

The region is investing
\$120,000
 per station-area house-
 hold to bring light rail
 service to Roosevelt.

TOC IN SEATTLE

As the region's biggest job center and the hub of the regional transit, Seattle has an unmatched potential to leverage transit investments by fostering high performing TOC. The City has long recognized the value of compact, walkable neighborhoods, and has adopted a planning framework organized around "urban villages" and "urban centers." By 2020, Sound Transit Link light rail will provide high capacity transit stations to a total of nine urban centers/villages outside of the downtown core. These station areas are Seattle's best opportunities for TOC.

From 1998 to 2001 the City of Seattle conducted a planning process that analyzed 29 potential station sites. More recently the City of Seattle prioritized neighborhood plan updates for four urban villages with existing light rail stations: Beacon Hill, North Rainier, Othello, and Rainier Beach. The former three plans have been completed and recommend upzones around the stations.

The City of Seattle recognizes the value of TOC, and has ongoing planning efforts for existing and future high-capacity transit station areas. The five Link light rail station areas in Southeast Seattle are all examples of station areas that are currently underperforming, and that could benefit greatly from more aggressive planning, policy measures, and infrastructure investments. The need for a more proactive strategy is evident in the fact that there was very little new development in any of the five station areas even as the Seattle passed through one of the biggest real estate booms in its history. Seattle's city planners are well aware of this need, and the hope is that in the future far more planning resources will be devoted to the promotion of TOC across Seattle.

LEVERAGING THE TRANSIT INVESTMENT

Transit investments represent significant public expenditure, and where investments have already been made, as in Seattle, the key economic issue becomes how to maximize equitable benefits to the taxpayers. And in a word, the necessary ingredient is density. Numerous studies have shown that transit ridership rises with the number of people and jobs within walking distance of a station. More people on the train means a more efficient system, as well as less driving and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

Allowing dense development in station areas also enables more equitable access to the benefits of the transit amenity. The estimated cost of extending Sound Transit's Link light rail line to the Brooklyn, Roosevelt, and Northgate stations is \$1.4 billion. Dividing by three for each station, that works out to roughly **\$120,000 per household within a half-mile radius of Roosevelt Station**. The more new households that are created near the light rail station, the more equitably that sizable public investment will be distributed.



Neighborhood Planning in Roosevelt

The Roosevelt neighborhood has a long history of engagement in neighborhood planning issues, and the Roosevelt Neighborhood Association (RNA) has played a consistently proactive role. Key planning documents for the neighborhood include the 1999 Neighborhood Plan, the 2001 Station Area Plan, and most recently, the 2006 Neighborhood Plan Update that was authored independently by the RNA and submitted for review by City staff.

The Roosevelt Neighborhood's values, as expressed in these plans, are well-aligned with the goals of TOC. More specifically, goals and recommendations in the 2006 Neighborhood Plan Update include:

- Develop a compact, active, pedestrian-friendly mixed-use core around the Sound Transit light rail station.
- Support zoning for mixed-use and high density residential in single block zones around the commercial core, with less intense mixed-use zoning along the arterials radiating from the commercial core.
- Promote higher-density dwellings, mixes of uses and transportation improvements in areas surrounding the commercial core.
- Encourage mixed-use and larger multi-family structures in and immediately surrounding the transit and commercial core to accommodate increased density.
- Take advantage of the location of the light rail station by promoting the concept of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) that provides housing, business and employment opportunities and reduces reliance on private autos.

THE ROOSEVELT CONTEXT

The Roosevelt Neighborhood is bounded to the North by 75th and Lake City Way, to the South by Ravenna Boulevard, to the East by 15th Avenue NE, and to the West by 8th Avenue NE, and encompasses approximately 60 city blocks, 1700 residences and 170 businesses. The neighborhood's business district is centered on Roosevelt Way NE and NE 65th Street, and consists of a mix of commercial and multifamily residential uses within a two to three block radius. The surrounding areas consist largely of early twentieth century craftsman bungalow and Tudor houses. Distinctive neighborhood amenities include the Green Lake Reservoir and adjoining Froula Park, Cowen Park, Roosevelt High School, and the Calvary Temple church.

Roosevelt Station

Sound Transit's planned North Link extension includes an underground station located on 12th Ave NE between NE 65th and NE 67th St, scheduled to open for service in 2020. The presence of a high-capacity transit station in the heart of the Roosevelt neighborhood offers an unprecedented opportunity for creating a TOC that will benefit local residents and businesses, while at the same time advancing city-wide and regional sustainability goals. But creating a high-performing TOC will require significant changes to the existing built environment---most importantly redevelopment that will put more people and jobs in proximity to the station.

Station area planning is typically focused on the area within a quarter-mile radius of the station, which corresponds to about a five-minute walk. In 2009 there were an estimated 851 households within a quarter-mile of Roosevelt Station, corresponding to a gross density of 7 housing units per acre, and as of 2008, there were an estimated 1275 jobs.

For reference, the recommended half-mile radius baseline performance targets proposed in the TOC Blueprint report (see page 6) convert to 3750 housing units and 2500 jobs within a quarter-mile. For the Roosevelt quarter-mile radius station area, 61 percent of the land is zoned single family, with remainder almost equally split between NC65, NC40, and low-rise. Consequently, upzones in the station area will be necessary to reach densities appropriate for a TOC.

The combination of existing low density buildings and limited development capacity allowed by zoning in the Roosevelt station can be expected to place a suboptimum limitation on ridership. And this expectation is reflected in Sound Transit's 2030 projection of only 8,500 daily boardings at the station by 2030. In comparison, the projection is 12,300 for Brooklyn Station, and 15,200 for Northgate Station. The reason for the higher projected ridership at Brooklyn and Northgate is simple: those station areas allow land use patterns that can accommodate more people and jobs.

Within a quarter-mile radius of the future station at Roosevelt:

	homes	jobs
Existing	851	1,275
TOC Targets	3,750	2,500



Looking South from Roosevelt High School

Photo: GGLO



Looking West from the corner of NE 65th St and 12th Ave NE

Photo: GGLO



The 1/2-mile walkshed surrounding Roosevelt Station extends deep into the neighborhood, enabling a myriad of opportunities to improve equitable access, and to provide a diverse range of options for living and playing.

Image: GGLO

RDG AND THE ROOSEVELT NEIGHBORHOOD

For the past three years the Roosevelt Development Group (RDG) has been exploring the potential for mixed-use development on multiple properties located in and around the commercial core of the Roosevelt neighborhood. RDG is a strong proponent of TOC, and is committed to delivering projects that both enhance neighborhood livability, and help reduce the region's environmental footprint.

RDG owns, hold options on, or possesses land lease contracts for 51 properties totaling 4.9 acres, located along NE 65th and NE 66th St between 12th Ave NE and 15th Ave NE, and on 15th Ave NE between NE 63rd and NE 68th St (see diagram, below left). All of the properties are less than a quarter-mile--roughly a five minute walk--from the planned light rail station at NE 65th and 12th Ave NE.

The zoning designations regulating the RDG-controlled properties include NC1-40, NC2-40, L2, LDT, and SF 5000. Based on the principles of TOC discussed throughout this document, the majority of these parcels are underzoned, given their close proximity to a high-capacity regional transit station. It will be impossible to fully leverage the social and environmental benefits of the transit investment unless most of these, as well as many other properties throughout the station area, are significantly upzoned to allow development with more height and housing unit capacity.

Development at higher densities during this economic cycle will make legacy (100+ year life span) developments feasible. Properties developed appropriately for long term growth will provide better buildings and infrastructure in the neighborhood core, thereby generating historical continuity for the Roosevelt Neighborhood in the years to come.

THE ROOSEVELT OPPORTUNITY

Currently, most of the RDG-controlled properties are underutilized, and many are in disrepair or unoccupied. Three quarters of the block on the northwest corner of 15th Ave NE and NE 65th is vacant and has been fenced off to minimize potential nuisance issues. In their current state, these properties contribute little to the vitality of the neighborhood, and several of the sites are significant liabilities. But these properties also represent an invaluable opportunity to bring positive change to the neighborhood, and to help create a high-performing TOC.

RDG has done preliminary planning and design work on a range of development scenarios for the properties they control. It became evident that for the majority of the properties, it would not be economically viable to develop under the existing zoning. That financial reality, coupled with the desire to develop their sites in a high-quality manner and at an intensity commensurate with the TOC opportunity, compelled RDG to explore the possibilities offered by upzones.

In general, taller buildings can be built to higher quality standards, enable more flexibility in form, and can often give developers the added financial incentive to offer more public amenities. With this in mind, RDG investigated increasing building heights to as high as 160 feet in some cases. This idea was controversial, but the design studies showed that as height increased, it became more feasible to set the buildings back from the property lines to provide public open space and enhance view corridors from street level.

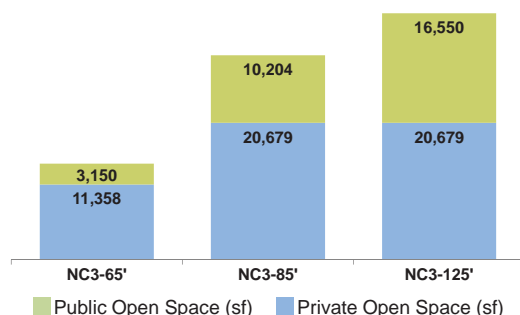
Throughout this exploratory process, RDG engaged the Roosevelt community to share information and to learn about the desires and concerns of residents. Highest on the wish list was open space and/or small park. Some of the biggest concerns were the impact of tall buildings on surrounding lower intensity uses, the preservation of views to and from the High School, and preserving the character of the Roosevelt Neighborhood.

The effects of varying development intensities are illustrated by three development scenarios located on the full block on the northwest corner of 15th and 65th, and the full block immediately to the west, and regulated by three zoning options: NC3-125, NC3-85, and NC3-65. Capacity study data are shown below:

	NC3-65	NC3-85	NC3-125
Residential Units	344	457	459
Net Density (units/ac)	172	229	229
Av. Floor Plate (sf)	29,350	27,813	19,121
Floor-Area Ratio	4.7	5.8	5.8
Public Open Space (sf)	3,150	10,204	16,550

Regarding housing unit density, there is a significant gain made in moving from 65' to 85', but no further gain moving to 125'. The 125' option does not yield more units because both the 85' and 125' zones are capped by the same maximum floor-area-ratio. With respect to bulk, the floor plates of the 65' and 85' buildings are about the same, while 125' option has more slender upper form. The 125' zone would enable a more graceful, less obtrusive building, even though it would be taller. Lastly, both the 85' and 125' options would enable the provision of public open space provided by setbacks from the property line. In contrast, 65' zoning would require complete lot coverage, and provide no new public open space.

Raising building height limits enables the provision of more public open space



Estimated open space for three development scenarios on two blocks, illustrating the potential public benefit value of building higher.

Image: RDG



THE BENEFITS AVAILABLE FROM TOC DEVELOPMENT

The redevelopment of the RDG properties in conjunction with a neighborhood TOC commitment has the potential to provide the full range of benefits discussed in this document, from local to regional scales, and in both social and environmental realms. New multifamily, mixed-use buildings located within a 1/4-mile of the planned light rail station will attract the one thing a transit-oriented community needs most: *people*. And in so doing, these new households and jobs will revitalize the Roosevelt neighborhood, help reduce the transportation carbon footprint of Seattle, and enable the sustainable accommodation of growth along with the preservation of forests and farmland across the region.

However, maximizing these benefits will require development at densities noticeably higher than what is characteristic of the neighborhood today. If the entire portfolio of RDG properties was developed under existing zoning, it would yield about 250 housing units. In comparison, development under site-appropriate zoning allowing building heights between 30 and 125 feet would yield upwards of 900 units. This would be a major step towards creating a high-performing TOC. But if these properties are underdeveloped, it will be a missed opportunity and a potential liability for decades to come.

NEIGHBORHOOD BENEFITS

The community benefits that thoughtfully executed development of the RDG properties could bring to the Roosevelt neighborhood include:

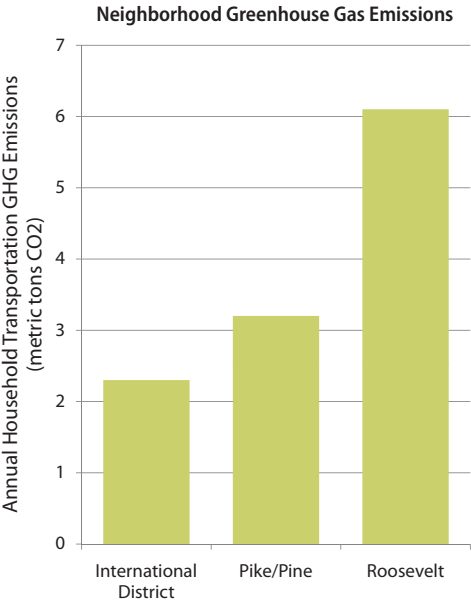
- *a more vibrant, economically viable commercial core*
- *improved streetscapes and enhanced walkability*
- *more open space*
- *affordable housing*
- *equitable access to efficient, inexpensive transportation*
- *reduced crime with "eyes on the street"*
- *the removal of blighted property*
- *reduced development pressure on the neighborhood's single-family areas*
- *potential for legacy developments*



Photos: GGLO



Looking north from downtown Seattle to Roosevelt and beyond
Photo: Dan Bertolet



CITY AND REGIONAL BENEFITS

Benefits that could be provided to the City of Seattle and the region as a whole include:

- accommodation of growth without aggravating traffic congestion
- increased tax revenue
- job creation, including construction jobs
- more effective use of the public tax dollars invested in transit
- reduction of stormwater runoff
- less sprawling development on the urban fringe
- cuts in greenhouse gas emissions
- more rapid adoption of the transit system as a viable alternative

The final bullet point is arguably the most powerful motivation for ensuring that any new development in the Roosevelt station area happens at the appropriate level of intensity -- these are 100-year decisions that will determine GHG emissions for generations to come.

The potential for meaningful reductions is demonstrated in the existing local examples shown in the table below. Data were generated from the Center for Neighborhood Technology's H+T Affordability Index online tool, which estimates transportation GHG emissions based on an array of input variables related to land use patterns and transit access. Typical households located near the International District Station -- Seattle's most transit-rich node -- have estimated transportation GHG emissions almost 2/3 lower than half those of households living near the planned Roosevelt station. GHG emissions in Pike/Pine fall in between, demonstrating the importance of both density and transit access.

Location	Transportation GHG Emissions (metric tons CO2 per household)	Gross Density (households per acre)	Commute Transit Ridership (% of workers)	Transit Accessibility Index
International District	2.3	25.0	41	164
Pike/Pine	3.2	30.5	45	110
Roosevelt	6.1	6.5	16	66

Data in the table above reveal the relationship between transportation GHG emissions, land use patterns, and transit access. The "transit accessibility index" is a measure of the number of bus routes and train stations within walking distance of households. The data suggest that emissions from households in the Roosevelt station area could be cut roughly in half if the gross housing unit density was in the range of 25 to 30 units/acre. Source: <http://htaindex.cnt.org>





What is an Environmental Benefits Statement?

The purpose of an Environmental Benefits Statement (EBS) is to articulate the wide range of benefits that can be provided by development. More specifically, a key goal of an EBS is to supplement the information that is furnished by a typical Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and thereby help bring breadth and balance to the public debate.

Development is inherently controversial, simply because it represents change. And unfortunately, that built-in controversy has a tendency to obscure the potential benefits associated with development. Large-scale development projects usually require an EIS, a document that tends to frame the debate in terms of the potential negative impacts, and how they can be mitigated. Unfortunately, an EIS often feeds the unconstructive dynamic of contention.

An EBS, in contrast, attempts to reframe the argument by focussing on the potential benefits to the community and environment. The economic, social, and environmental benefits that responsible development can provide tend to be relatively abstract, and therefore challenging for residents and other stakeholders to understand and appreciate. An EBS illuminates these benefits, and holistically focuses appropriate attention on all there is to be gained—at the neighborhood, city-wide, and regional scales.