SA CORRIDORS

TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE LAND USE

FRAMEWORK

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San Antonio is at a tipping point. With the adoption of the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan, we now have a roadmap for a more prosperous and connected San Antonio. At the same time, VIA is continuing to invest in Primo (enhanced express bus) transit service with new rapid transit routes set to begin service in the near future. We know that San Antonio will have a world-class transit system one day. How it looks and functions is up to us.

The San Antonio of today is a City built for the automobile, but things were not always this way. Until the early 1930's a system of electric streetcars moved passengers between downtown and close-in neighborhoods. Looking at these areas, it's easy to see why transit worked so well in those days. Small blocks, a diverse mix of uses, and compact development made riding transit an efficient way to get around. We can influence how transit works for San Antonio in the future by encouraging this same kind of compact, diverse development. This style of development is often called transit-supportive land use or TSLU for short.

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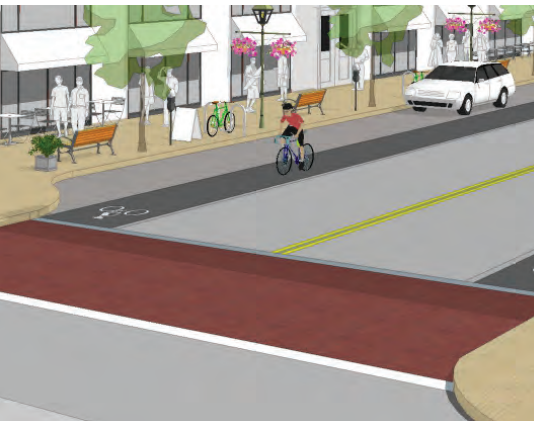
Streetcar-era development at N. Zarzamora and W. Woodlawn

WHAT IS TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE LAND USE?

Transit cannot run efficiently if destinations, people, and jobs are spread out and difficult to access. Transit-supportive land use is a style of development that puts people and places within an easy reach of transit. Transit-supportive places present residents and workers with a range of mobility options, services, and recreational opportunities, as well as access to key destinations, like work and school, within a short distance from home. TSLU is not a new concept, but it can be the new basis for how we shape San Antonio. Successful transit-supportive land use has the following characteristics:



Public Realm

Streets, sidewalks, and public gathering spaces make up the public realm. Transit-supportive public realms are all about walking. Short blocks are a sign of a well-connected street network. Wider sidewalks and engaging streetscapes make walking feel more comfortable. Bike lanes and crosswalks allow multiple modes to share the roadway.

Physical Form

TSLU does not stop at the sidewalk. The way buildings are designed and parked has a big impact on the way people interact with a neighborhood, corridor, or district. TSLU design principles focus on improving the pedestrian experience. Active ground floor uses and parking lots that do not front the roadway are key features.

People

Activity is the biggest driver of transit ridership. Transit-supportive land use promotes a compact mix of people and jobs. Destinations should be diverse with a mix of uses present to keep activity high throughout the day.

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CREATING WALKABLE PLACES

Transit-supportive places are inherently walkable. Whether rapid transit already exists or is merely in planning stages, San Antonio's major corridors should become safer and more convenient for walking. This means focusing both on **physical form** - the uses and styles of development that are allowed to occur, and the **public realm** - investing in transit-supportive infrastructure like sidewalks, crossings, bicycle facilities, and B-Cycle stations.

TOD vs TSLU

Transit-oriented development (TOD) and transit-supportive land use (TSLU) are related, but they are not the same. As its name implies, TOD is a style of development that is well-integrated with an existing transit investment. The same things that make TOD attractive can also be applied in areas that don't yet have rapid transit infrastructure. Transit-supportive land use seeks to create places that make transit work efficiently, even if high quality transit service hasn't yet arrived. San Antonio is still growing its rapid transit network, and we want to be sure that every neighborhood, corridor, and district is ready when it arrives.

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Even without rapid transit, the Pearl neighborhood's mix of uses and wide sidewalks makes it transit-supportive.

SA CORRIDORS/TSLU GOALS

SA Corridors and the TSLU Framework follows closely on the heels of the City of San Antonio's SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. Incentivizing transit-supportive development was a major component of SA Tomorrow and the chapters that follow lay out a road map for TSLU implementation. In addition, the TSLU framework supports the following SA Tomorrow goals and policies:

- Focus higher density uses within the City's 13 regional centers and along its arterial and transit corridors. -*Growth and City Form, Goal 1*
- Work with VIA Metropolitan Transit to develop a long-term transit plan that facilitates transit-supportive development. -*Growth and City Form, Policy 21*
- Continue to focus on the revitalization of neighborhoods adjacent to downtown and extend these efforts to regional centers, urban centers and transit corridors. -Growth and City Form, Policy 8
- Encourage and incentivize the development of a range of affordable housing options in and near regional centers and transit corridors. - *Housing, Policy 24*
- Coordinate economic development efforts and land use plans to encourage and incentivize employment growth within regional centers and along transit corridors. - *Jobs and Economic Competitiveness, Policy 30*

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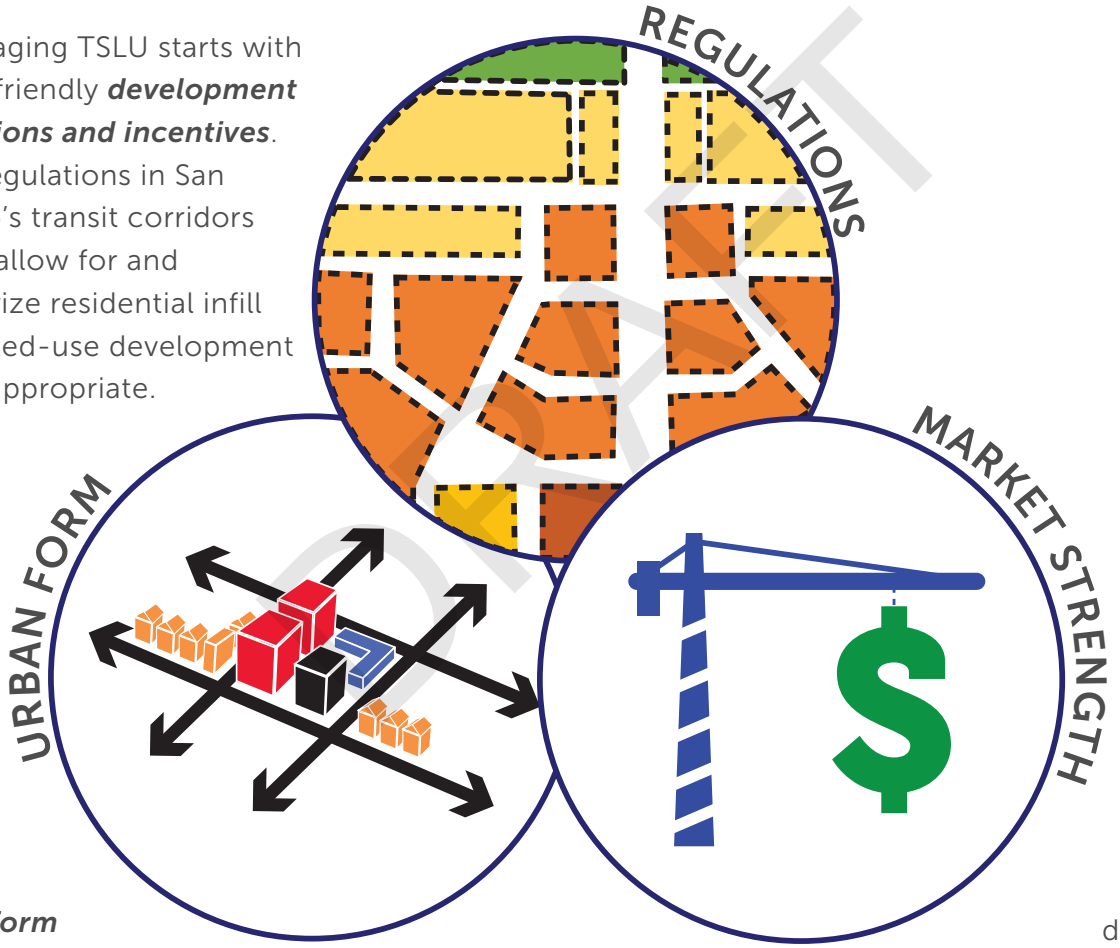
THE STATE OF TSLU IN SAN ANTONIO

In order to chart a course for a more transit-supportive San Antonio, we need to first understand where we are today. San Antonio is a dynamic city, but its ability to attract transit-supportive development to station areas has a lot to do with local market, infrastructure, and regulatory conditions. Across its 500 square miles, no two neighborhoods are exactly the same. In a complex place like San Antonio, understanding urban form, the economy and local regulations can help us understand the current state of TSLU.

Encouraging TSLU starts with transit-friendly ***development regulations and incentives***. Local regulations in San Antonio's transit corridors should allow for and incentivize residential infill and mixed-use development where appropriate.



Urban form includes sidewalk coverage, street connectivity, and density. Measuring ***urban form*** helps us understand how transit-supportive SA's transit corridors are today.

The level of development activity varies across San Antonio. Understanding ***market strength*** helps right-size the level of investment needed to incentivize transit-supportive development.

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UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE (UDC)

San Antonio's Unified Development Code (UDC) regulates how land in SA's transit corridors can be developed. The UDC has far-reaching implications for how the corridors develop. It regulates the height, bulk, use, and density of buildings. The UDC and its zoning regulations are the City's best tool for encouraging transit-supportive development.

OVERLAY DISTRICTS	
H, MAOZ, RIO, etc.	
BASE ZONE DISTRICTS	**SPECIAL DISTRICTS**
C2, MF33, I1, etc.	*TOD, IDZ, FBZ, etc.*

San Antonio's zoning is organized into base zones and special districts. Base zones are the most common type of zoning and is the default for most areas. Special districts address unique situations and offer an alternative to proceeding under base zoning. In certain areas, overlay districts may be combined with base zones or special districts. Together, these regulations cover a wide range of possible development types. The City also has a number of zoning tools that specifically encourage denser, more transit-suppoprtive development.

Infill Development Zone (IDZ)

IDZ is a special district that provides flexible standards for use, setbacks, and parking. It is specifically targeted at development and reuse of underutilized parcels. While it provides more flexibility, its applicability is currently limited to the Community Revitalization Action Group (CRAG) boundary which roughly corresponds to the City's boundaries as they existed in 1940.

IDZ Example: Steel House Lofts

Mixed Use District (MXD)

MXD is a special district that does not regulate use, but instead permits use based on a site plan. It encourages urban design principles that promote pedestrian activity and a mix of uses. While this district can be proposed in any area of the City, there is only one development to-date that has taken advantage of this tool.

MXD Example: Quarry Village

Transit-Oriented Development District (TOD)

TOD is a special district specifically focused on higher density development in close proximity to a transit station. It allows for reduced parking requirements, higher densities, and additional density from transfers of development rights. There are currently no examples of development in this zone in San Antonio, though one project is currently underway.

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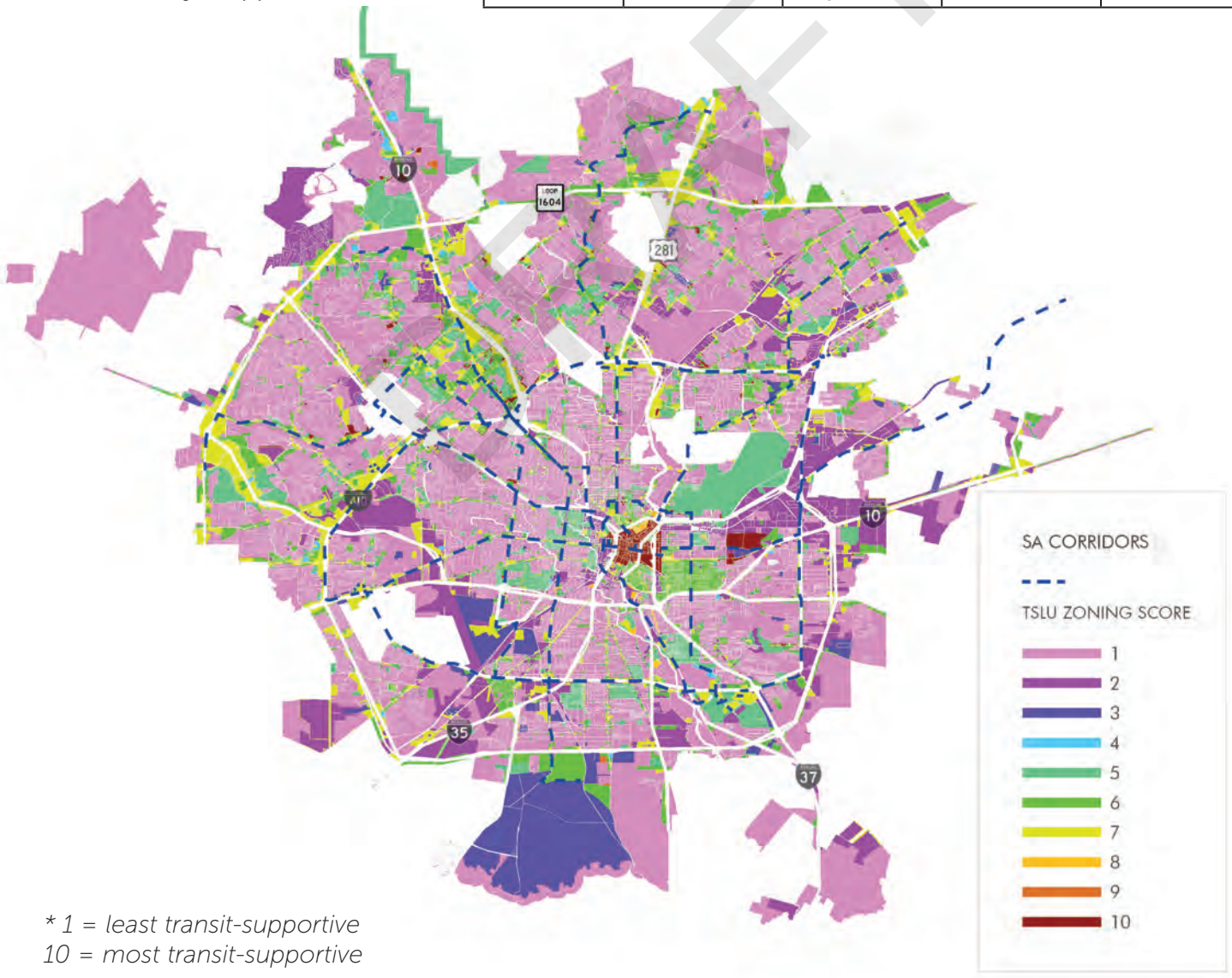
ZONING AND TSLU

San Antonio's zoning toolbox already contains many of the tools necessary to allow transit-supportive development to occur. Where and how those tools are applied will need to be reconsidered as new rapid transit routes are added to the City's transit corridors. The table to the right shows the most common commercial and residential zones relative to their ability to produce TSLU. The map below shows the transit-supportiveness of zones as they are currently mapped.*

Transit Support	Commercial	Multifamily	Single Family	Special District
MORE ↕ LESS	D	MF65	R3	MXD
	O2	MF50	R4	FBZ T6
	O1.5	MF40	R5	FBZ T5
	C3	RM4	R6	IDZ
	C2	MF33	R20	AE-3
	C1	MF25	RM6	AE1 / AE2
	O1	MF18		FBZ T4
		RM5		



** 1 = least transit-supportive*
10 = most transit-supportive

PARKING

Parking drives the design of buildings and can have a big impact on how corridors look and feel. Consider the differences between SW Military Drive and lower Broadway Street. Each is 6 lanes wide with a center turn-lane, but for pedestrians, they feel very different. Broadway's development is a mix of new and old. Buildings built before automobile use was the norm have very little parking while newer development accommodates parking in garages or internal parking. SW Military's development is more recent, and high parking requirements mean large surface parking lots are common.

Broadway at Grayson

S.W. Military at S. Zarzamora

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Parking also has a major impact on development feasibility and affordability. Parking can cost anywhere from $3,000 per space in a surface parking lot to $50,000 per space for an underground garage. Since most new developments in San Antonio typically do not charge their tenants for on-site parking, the need to provide parking is an expense for developers and competes with leasable space for storefronts and dwelling units. Often, the cost of parking is passed through to tenants in the form of higher rents.

Minimum parking requirements are defined by building use in San Antonio's UDC. The table to the right shows selected uses and their minimum parking requirements. These requirements apply to all base zones, but can be reduced in IDZ, TOD, and MXD special districts.

Use	Minimum Parking Requirement
1-2 Family Dwellings	1 per Unit
Multifamily Dwellings	1.5 per Unit
Retail (General)	1 per 300 sf Gross Floor Area
Retail (Fast Food)	1 per 150 sf Gross Floor Area
Office (General)	1 per 300 sf Gross Floor Area

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INCENTIVES

San Antonio's incentive toolkit is currently better stocked for employment and business assistance than for residential and mixed-use development. Economic development and employment related tools include tax abatements and public improvement districts (PIDs) - which allow value to be captured and reinvested locally. San Antonio also has Promise, Empowerment and Enterprise zones which include business financing programs (in some cases targeted to specific business sectors).

Residential programs tend to be more focused on geographically targeted portions of the City or limited in terms of funding capacity. Compared to some metro areas, the many employer-focused programs offer more opportunity for development with significant job components than is typically the case; however, housing incentives are less impactful – especially outside the **Center City Housing Incentive Program (CCHIP)** area and the core area known as the **Community Revitalization Action Group (CRAG)**. The map below shows the limited reach of these areas relative to SA's transit corridors.

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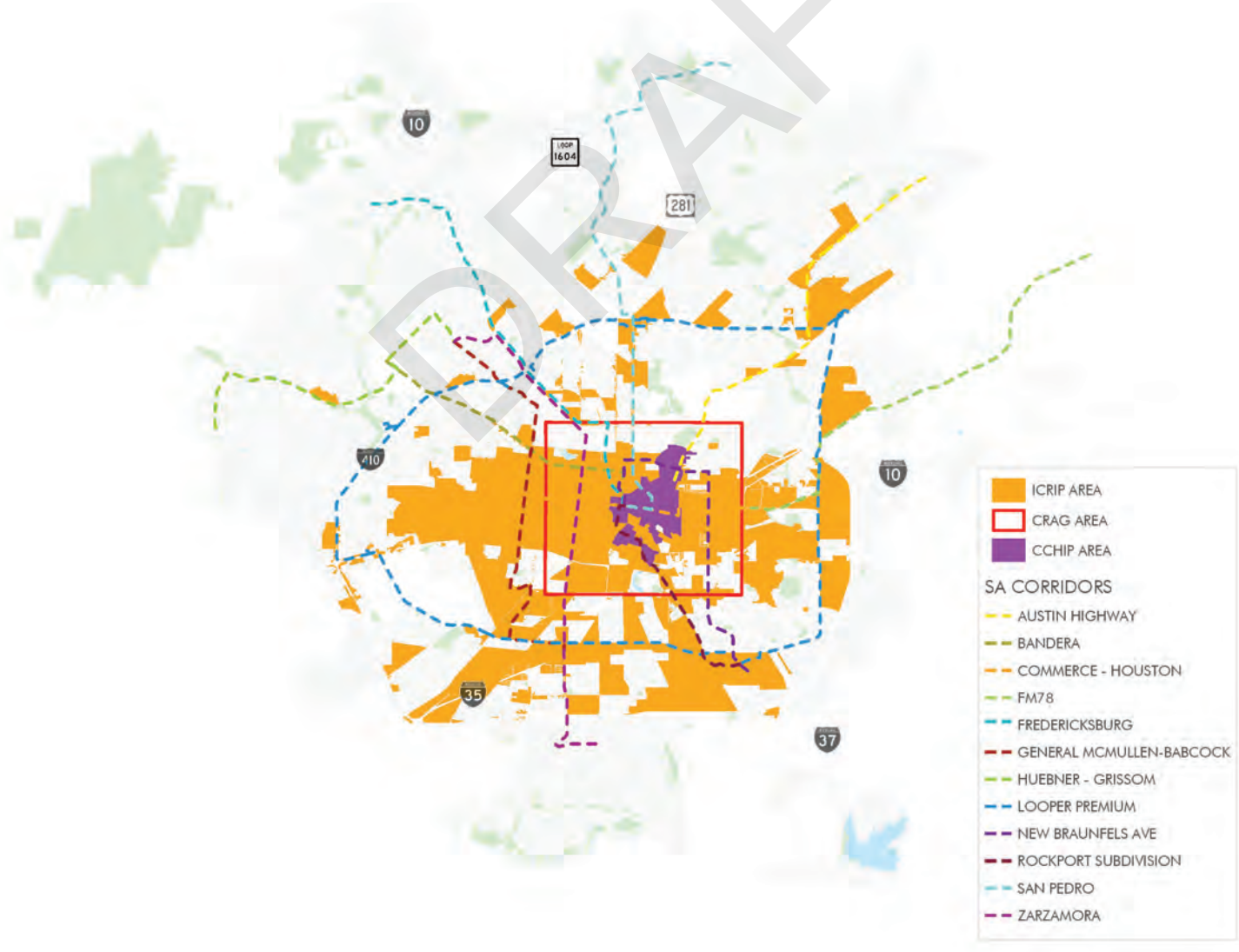

INVESTMENT TOOLS DEFINED

Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) – Standard urban renewal tool whereby added property taxes can be allocated to fund public improvements. Subject to blight-related criteria. May also apply incremental sales tax – an advantage for commercial districts – though this does not appear to be a feature of San Antonio's TIRZ program. Generally limited to geographically discrete areas in the core area and South Side.

Inner City Reinvestment/Infill Policy (ICRIP) – Providing for a wide range of regulatory, procedural and financing incentives (primarily focused on fee waivers), generally within the I-410 loop – except for some limited areas on the North Side.

Community Revitalization Action Group (CRAG) – Aimed to facilitate the development and redevelopment of neighborhoods, businesses and cultural resources within a 36 square mile area centered on downtown San Antonio.

Center City Housing Incentive Policy (CCHIP) – Providing financial incentives including impact fee waivers, property tax rebates, and forgivable loans for multi-family housing, geographically focused on a limited portion of the area extending from the Pearl through to the south side of downtown.

Tax Abatements - The City of San Antonio offers a tax abatement of up to 100 percent on real and/or personal property taxes on improvement values for up to 10 years. Target industries include aviation/aerospace; logistics and distribution; and manufacturing, among others. Abatement applications are subject to approval by City Council.

Promise Zone – Focused on high poverty communities as a HUD program with current emphasis on an Eastside Education and Training Center. Geographically limited to the Eastpoint area east of downtown.

Choice Neighborhood – A HUD designation aimed to link housing improvements with public services, with limited funding ($250,000) targeted to the Wheatley Courts area.

Historic Tax Credits - Following substantial rehabilitation of residential properties, City property taxes are frozen at the assessed value prior to rehabilitation for up to 10 years. Substantially rehabilitated commercial properties are eligible for the 5 Zero/5 Fifty tax exemption: no City property taxes are owed for the first five (5) years, and for the next five (5) years the City taxes are assessed at 50% of a post-rehabilitation appraisal.

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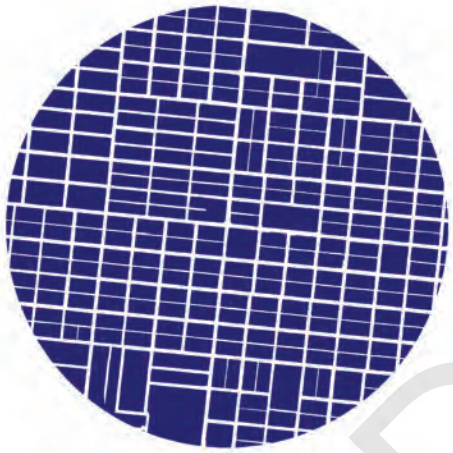
URBAN FORM

The existing infrastructure and development patterns in San Antonio's transit corridors have a big impact on how people choose to get around. In areas where destinations are clustered together and the street network makes walking easy, people tend to drive less. Where walking is more difficult and daily destinations are further apart, driving is the norm. There is no "one size fits all" approach to promoting transit-supportive land use. Rather, the types of public investments we make should respond to the unique conditions in each of the City's transit corridors. Consider the street grid in each of the three proposed station areas below. Zarzamora & Commerce, on one end of the spectrum, already supports walking and transit use while 281 & Stone Oak presents a greater challenge. Likewise, the need for sidewalks, crossings, and new roads will differ among all three stations.



Zarzamora & Commerce

Nacogdoches & Thousand Oaks

281 & Stone Oak Pkwy

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Measuring Transit-Supportiveness

Transit-supportive neighborhoods and corridors often score well in what is known as the three "P's" - physical form, performance (of transit), and people. Measuring these attributes of place allows us to capture the urban character of San Antonio's transit corridors.

- ***Physical Form*** *- Density of blocks, sidewalk coverage, and presence of bicycle facilities*
- ***Performance*** *- Existing transit frequency (buses per hour during the AM peak commute)*
- ***People*** *- Activity Density (residents + jobs per acre)*

TRANSIT-ADJACENT
TRANSIT-RELATED
TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE

Transit-Adjacent areas are built primarily for driving. They will require major investments and significant new development in the future in order to work efficiently with transit.

Transit-Related areas exhibit some, but not all the attributes of transit-supportive places. For example, they may score well in terms of density, but their road network and block sizes may make walking difficult.

Transit-Supportive areas have a strong mix of density and street connectivity. These tend to be older parts of the city that originally developed around transit, but more recent examples exist.

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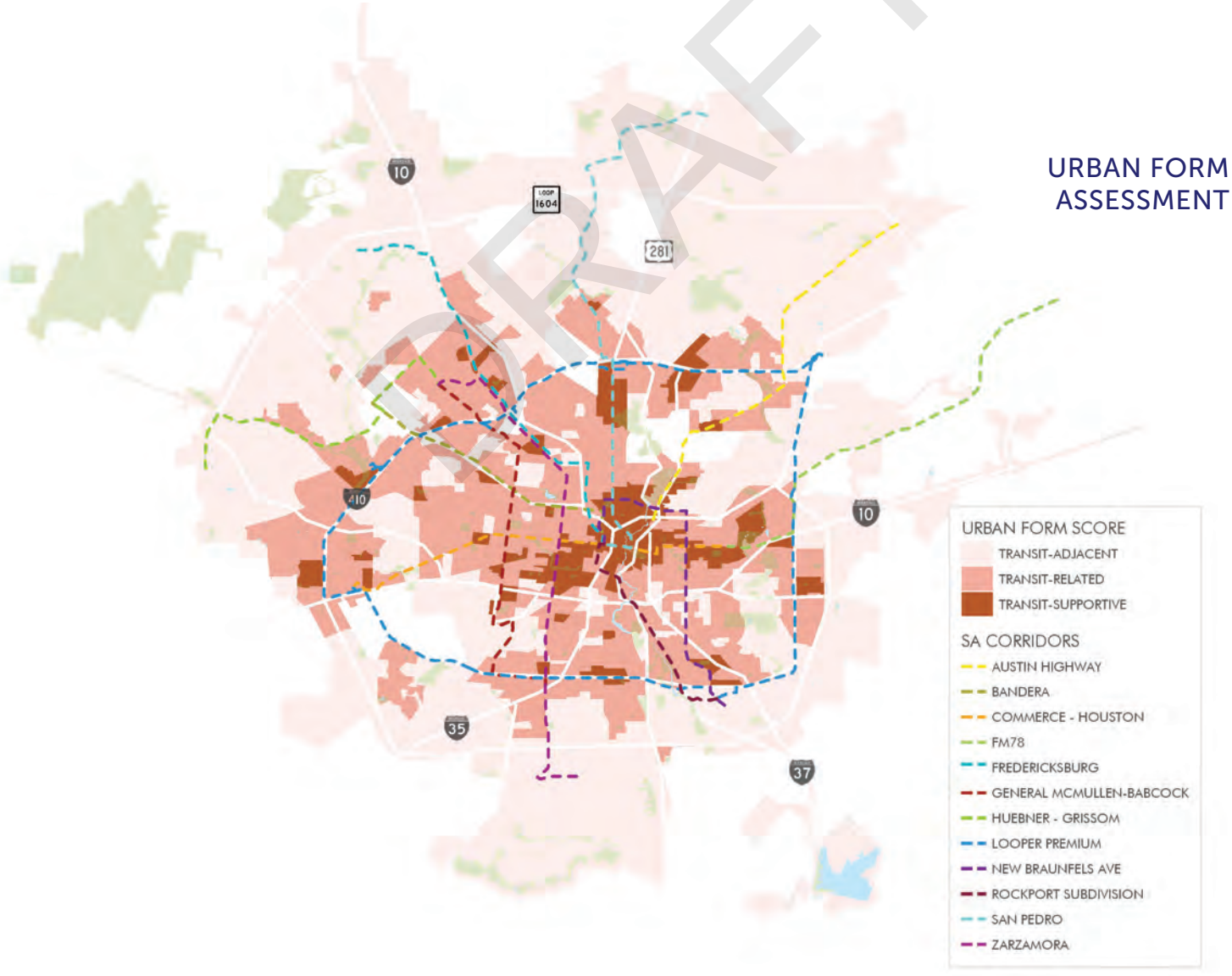
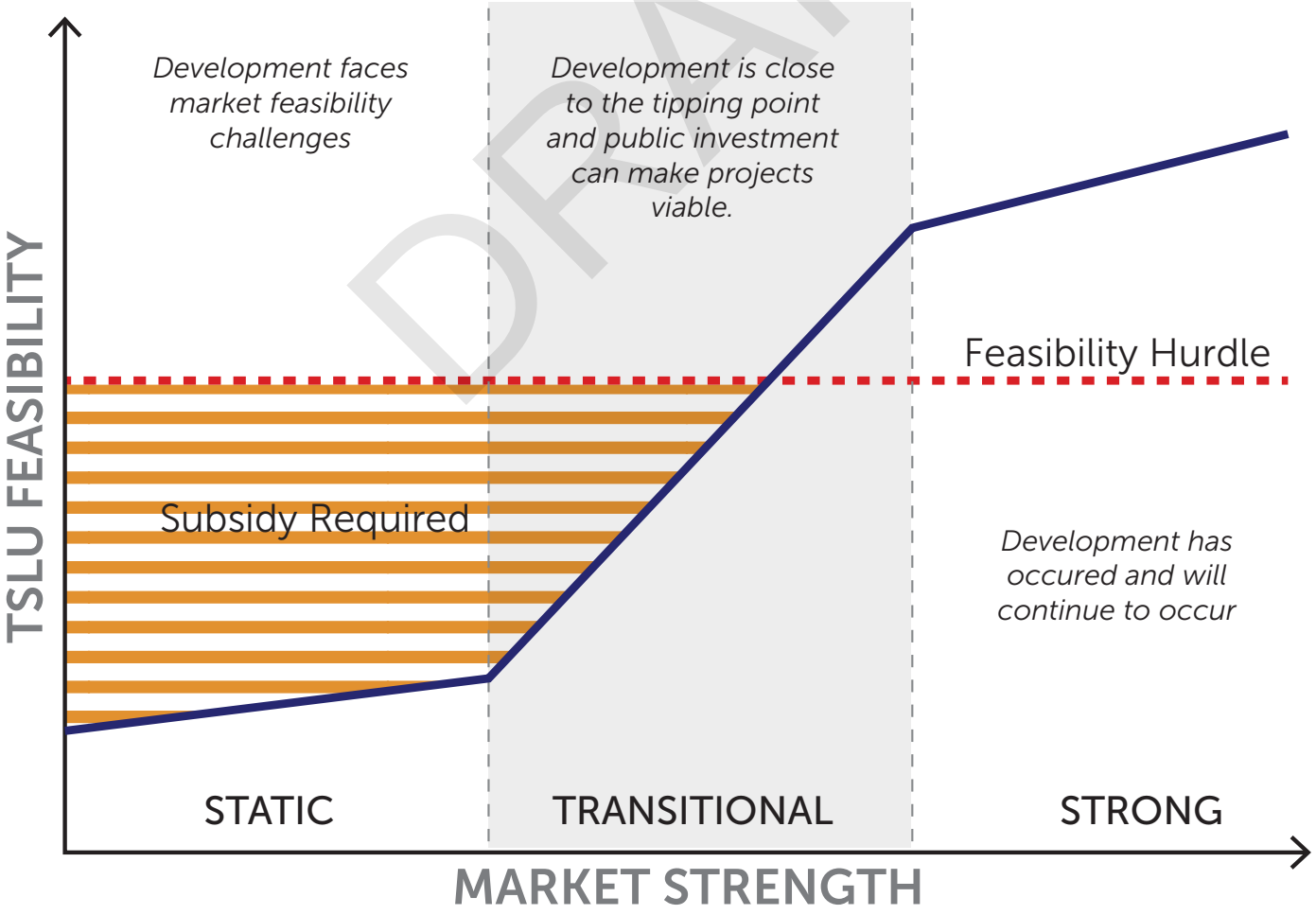
URBAN FORM ASSESSMENT



MARKET STRENGTH

Real estate market strength plays a major role in determining what can and will be built in a given station area or corridor. If developers are unable to turn a profit, it is unlikely they will invest in an area unless they can access public subsidies. The market strength of any given transit community can also provide guidance on the size of public investments needed to spur development.

The chart below illustrates how the amount of public subsidy required to make transit-supportive projects possible varies across markets. Where there is little economic activity, markets are said to be "static" and a relatively large subsidy would be required to make development feasible. In transitional and strong markets, development may occur on its own without public subsidy. The strategies the City of San Antonio applies to these areas should be tailored to their need. In areas with static markets, the focus should be on basic infrastructure while in transitional markets, incentives like tax abatements and impact fee waivers may be all that is needed to make development possible.



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STATIC

TRANSITIONAL

STRONG

Static markets are those where very little development is occurring. Vacancy rates may be high in these areas and achievable rents may have declined in recent years.

Transitional markets exhibit some development activity with vacancy rates that are around the average for Bexar County. In these areas, development can increase rapidly as public investments are made.

Strong market areas have low vacancy rates and significant development activity. In these areas, land prices may be significantly higher than in other parts of the region.

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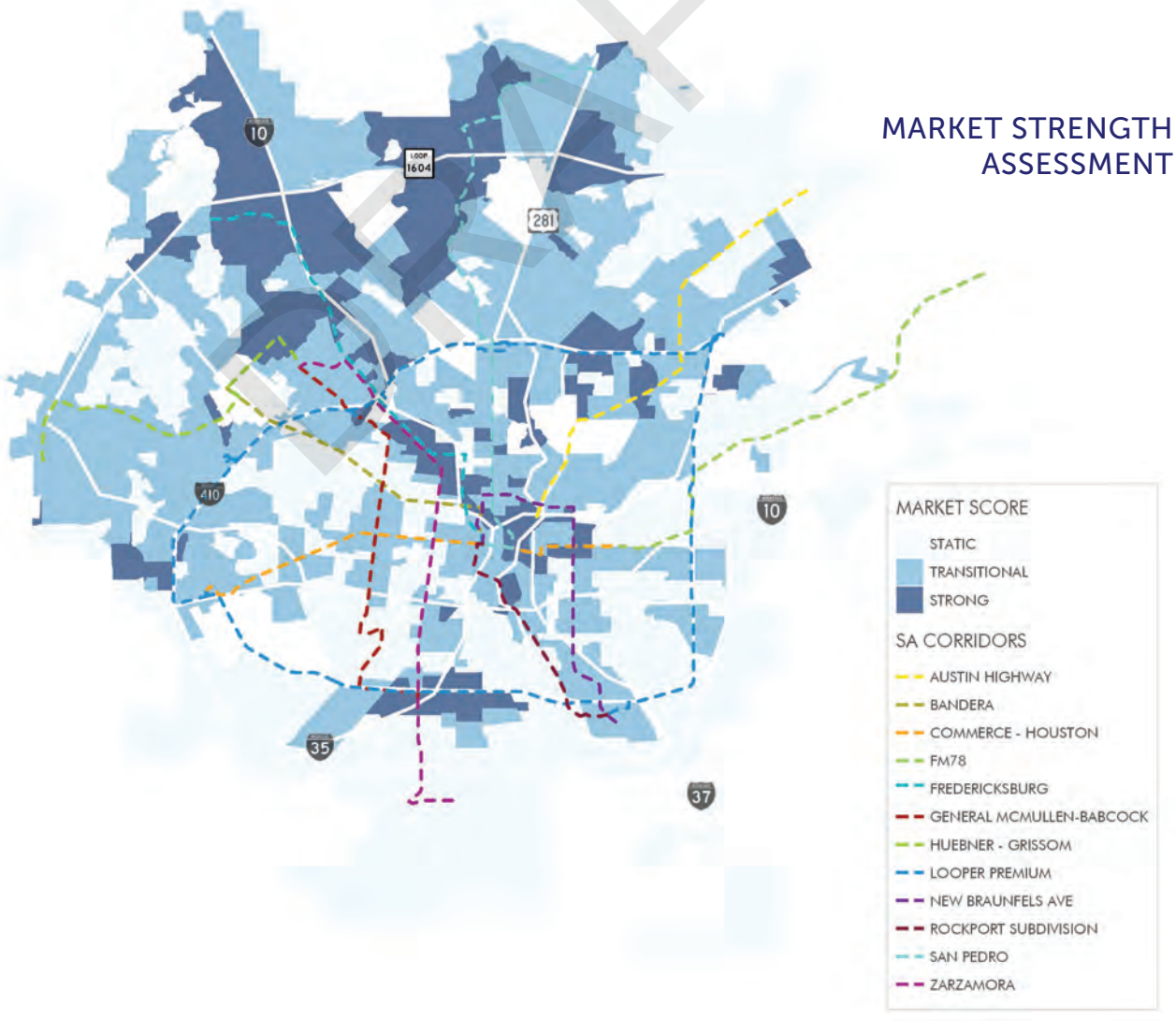
MARKET STRENGTH ASSESSMENT



WHAT IS A TYPOLOGY?

Public dollars are a scarce resource and need to be applied strategically for the greatest public benefit. A typology is a powerful tool that helps classify and differentiate transit communities by the size and type of investment that fits them best. Typologies have been used in cities and regions across the country to better make use of limited funding for TSLU implementation. In Portland, METRO developed a TOD typology to help guide their small, but highly strategic TOD grant program. Denver recently completed their TOD Strategic Plan, Transit Oriented Denver, which provided a vision for density in station areas and led to more detailed station area planning around their light rail transit system.

VIA's Service Typology

In the San Antonio region, VIA Metropolitan Transit recently developed a service typology for proposed stations along future rapid transit routes. This typology charts the desired level of activity, urban form characteristics, and land use mix that would best support different levels of transit service. VIA's typology looks beyond the existing conditions to an aspirational target for activity and urban form in station areas. Recently VIA worked with the City of San Antonio to align the terminology of this typology with place types developed as part of the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan.

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A FRAMEWORK FOR TSLU INVESTMENT

The SA Corridors TSLU Investment Framework seeks to build upon the service typology developed by VIA Metropolitan Transit. It provides strategic guidance for the City of San Antonio and its partners to support transit-supportive development in station areas. It does so by taking into account the market position and built environment characteristics unique to each station area. The TSLU Investment Framework has two main components:

TSLU Typology

The TSLU Typology uses the data discussed in Chapter 2 to categorize each station in VIA's Vision2040 rapid transit network based on urban form and market strength.

Strategy Clusters

The TSLU typology includes 9 distinct land use/market categories. Similar categories are then subsequently grouped into larger strategy clusters. Strategy clusters help define the types of interventions that are most appropriate for station areas given their market position and need.

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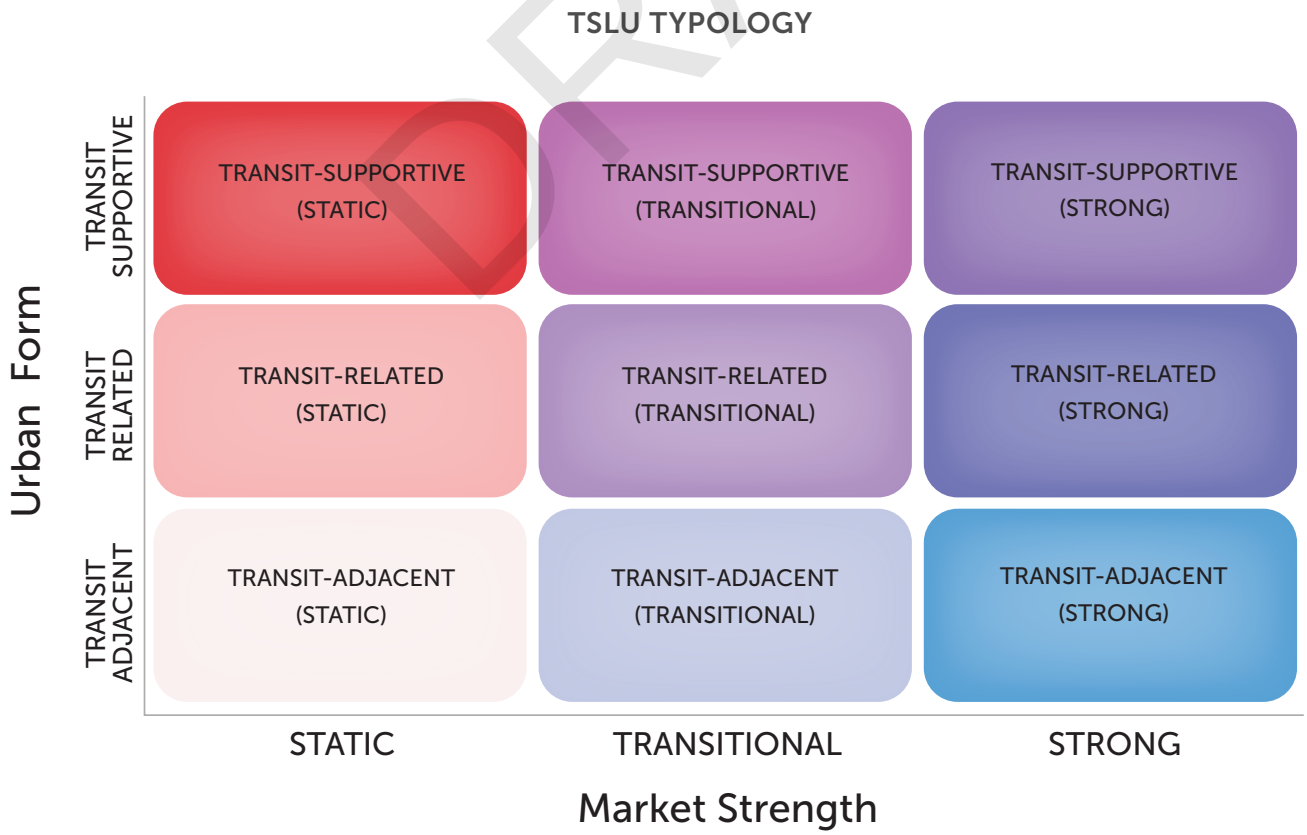
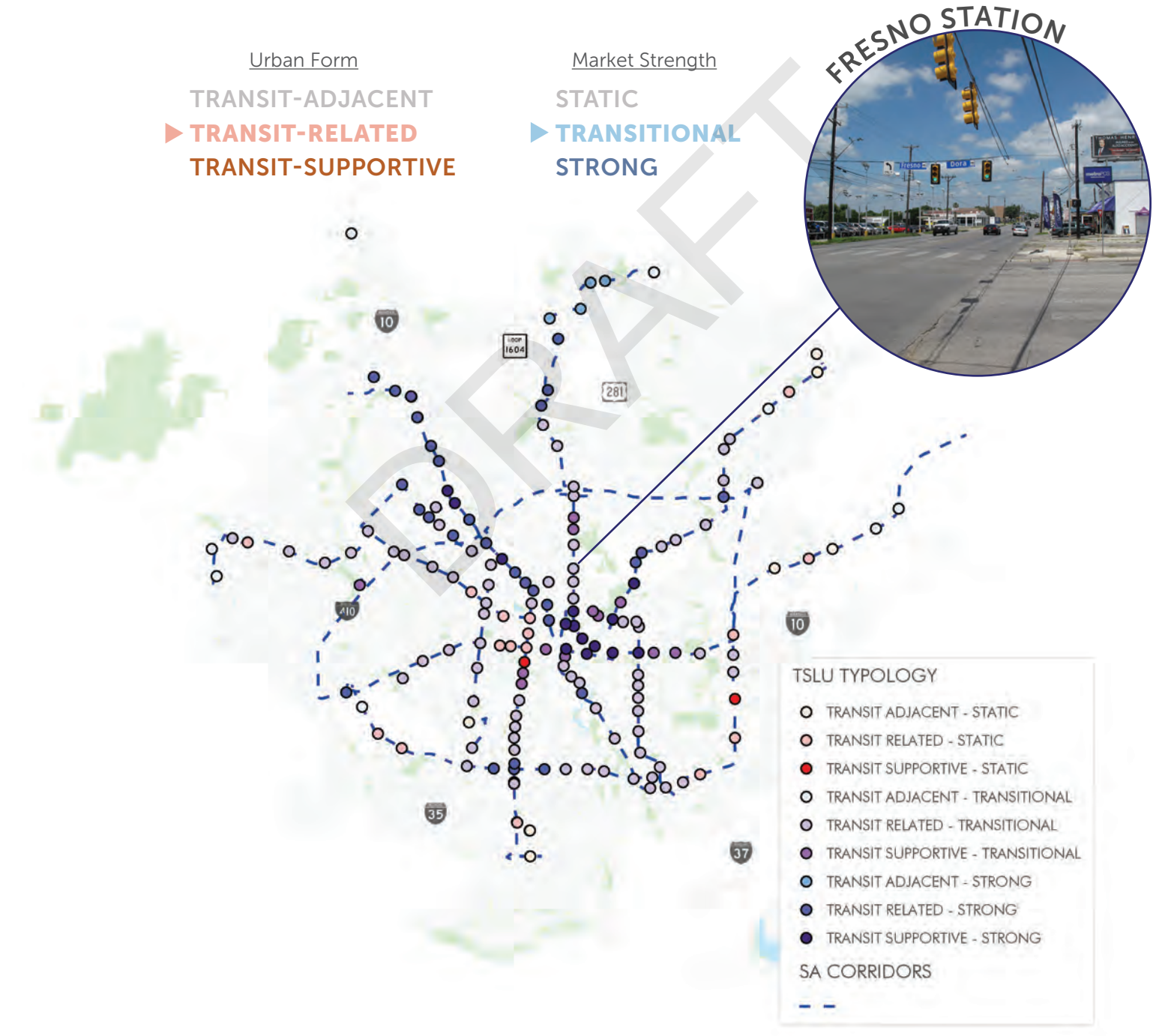


MAPPING THE TSLU TYPOLOGY

Using the urban form assessment and market strength assessments, proposed stations in VIA's Vision 2040 network can be scored and categorized according to the their own unique characteristics. The map below shows stations categorized into the the nine TSLU typology place types.



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STRATEGY CLUSTERS

The TSLU land use/market categories present a nuanced way of understanding station areas, but many categories face similar challenges. Consider one station area with transit-supportive urban form and a static market and another with a strong market and transit-adjacent urban form. They may appear very different, but similar strategies are appropriate for both. Both stations in this example will likely need only small, targeted investments in order to stimulate transit-supportive development.

Nurture

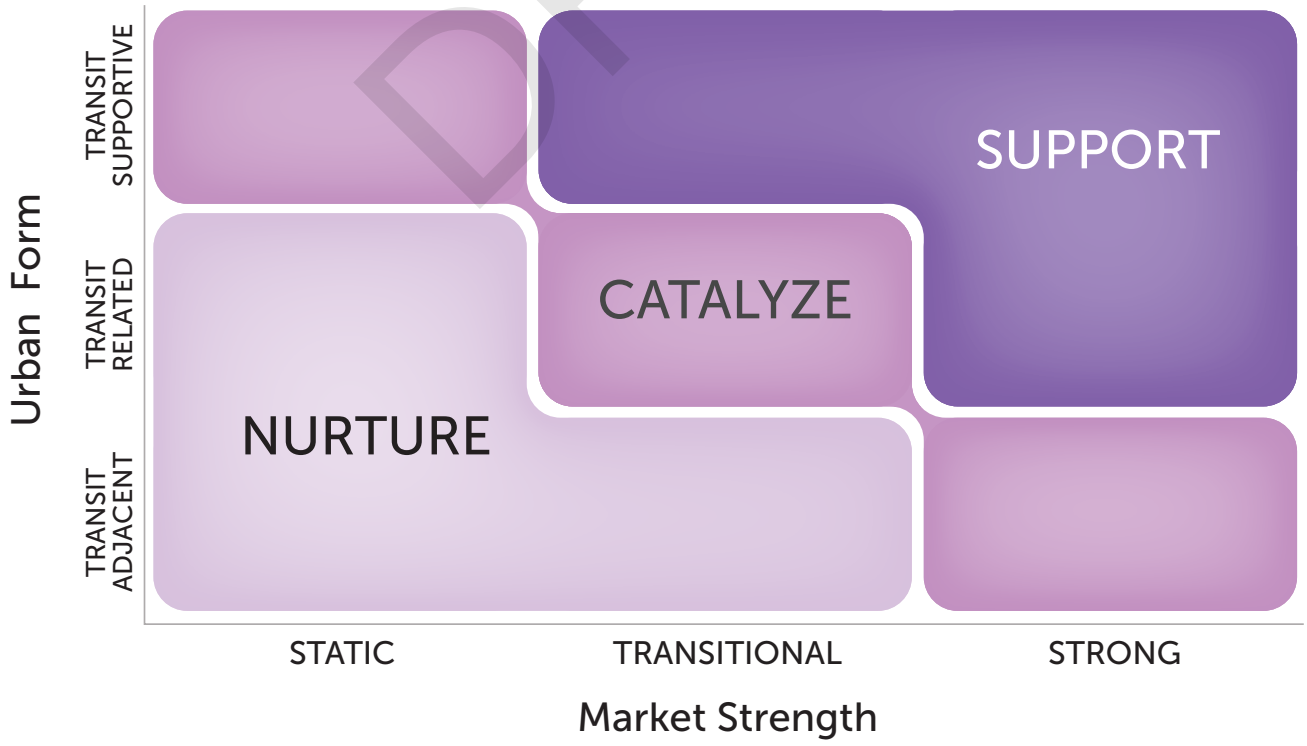
Market strength is generally transitional or static and urban form is transit adjacent or related. Development incentives are unlikely to be effective in these areas due to large feasibility gaps. These areas will benefit most from long-term planning and investment in basic infrastructure.

Catalyze

Stations strong in urban form or market, but not both. These areas may not be seeing transit-supportive development today, but could if strategic investments are made.

Support

The market is already producing new development, so the focus should be on pushing the envelope in transit-supportive projects, value capture, and affordable housing.



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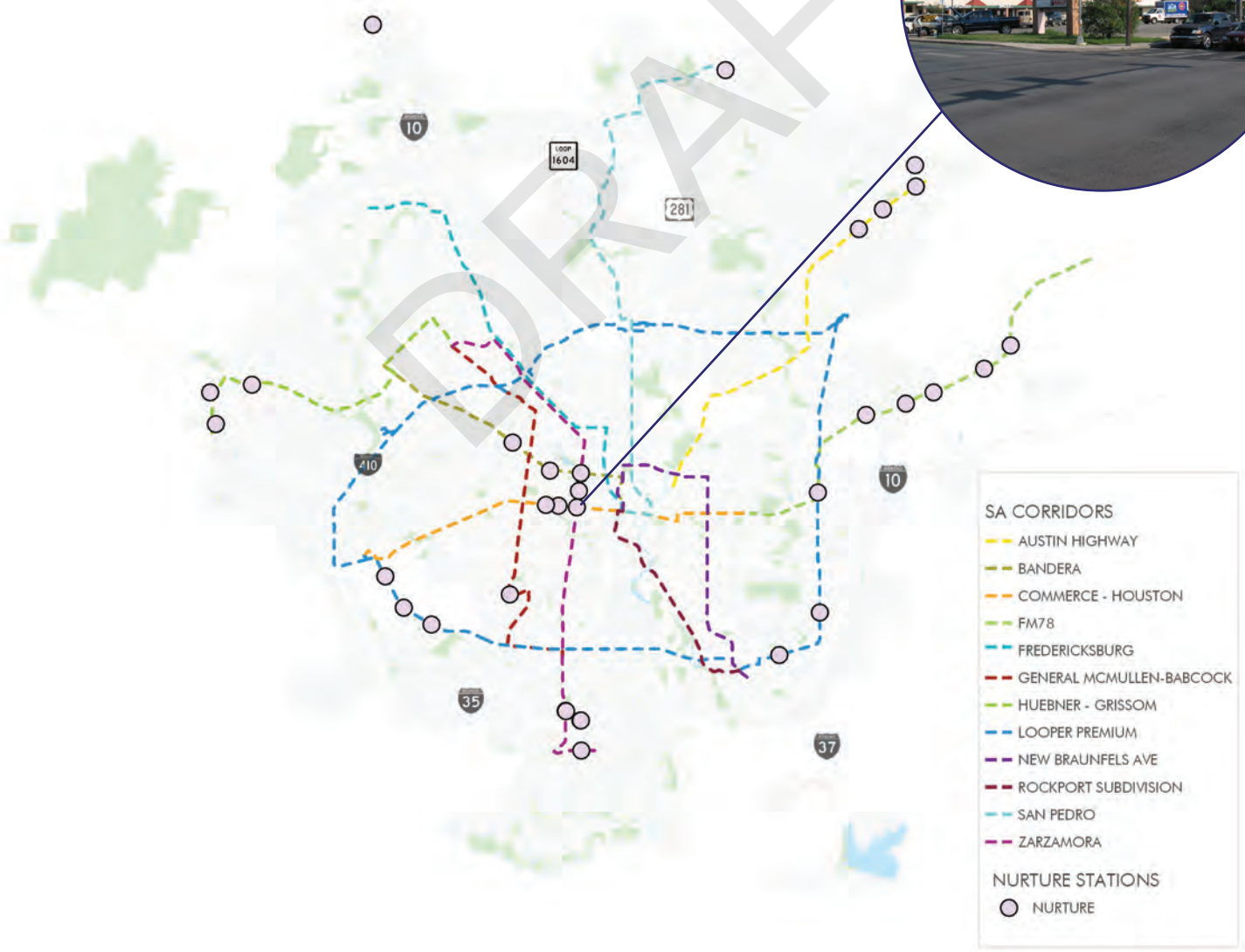
NURTURE CLUSTER

Ths cluster is characterized by current weak or static market conditions and by limited or moderate levels of Transit-Related activity. These station areas generally represent the lowest priority areas for substantial direct investment because financial feasibility gaps tend to be large. Initial focus should be on early stage planning and partnering, including potential land-banking, infrastructure or other non-development investments to set the stage for future transit-supportive development.

A transit-related Neighborhood Main Street in a static market – set in a well-established, densely developed and primarily single family urban neighborhood. Focus should be on low to medium-density residential infill.

ZARZAMORA STATION



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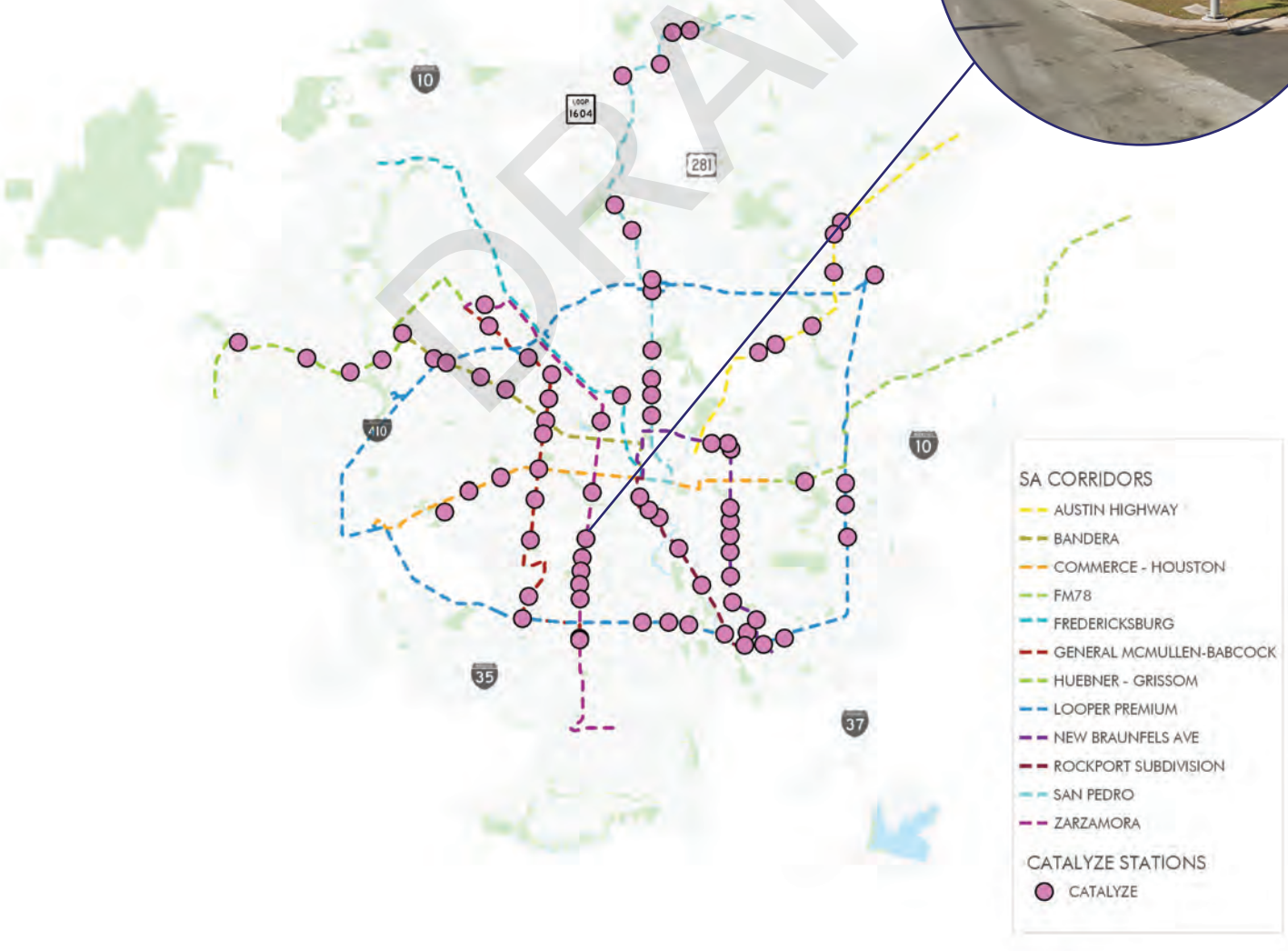
CATALYZE CLUSTER

Catalyze is a strategy for communities demonstrating either a strong transit orientation but limited market support or transit-related urban form and an emerging market. While offering some physical and/or market support for TSLU, catalytic areas are not yet able to achieve transit-supportive building types and densities on their own. Project investment should catalyze highly visible, pioneering public-private development and place-making infrastructure to enhance walkability and increased connectivity across all modes.

MALONE STATION

Adjacent to a recent shopping center development, Malone Station is identified as a transit-related Community Corridor station area in a transitional market. Actions at this station should focus on catalyzing public-private development including re-purposing of aging retail shopping centers.



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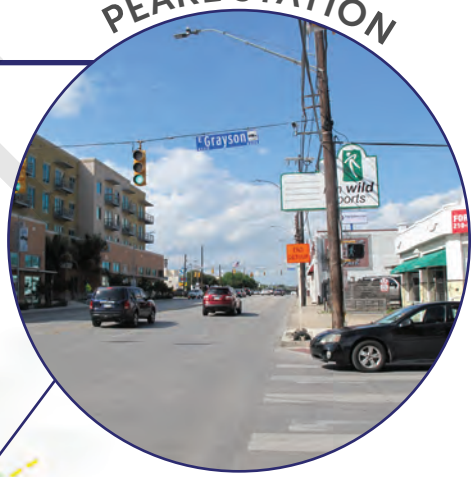
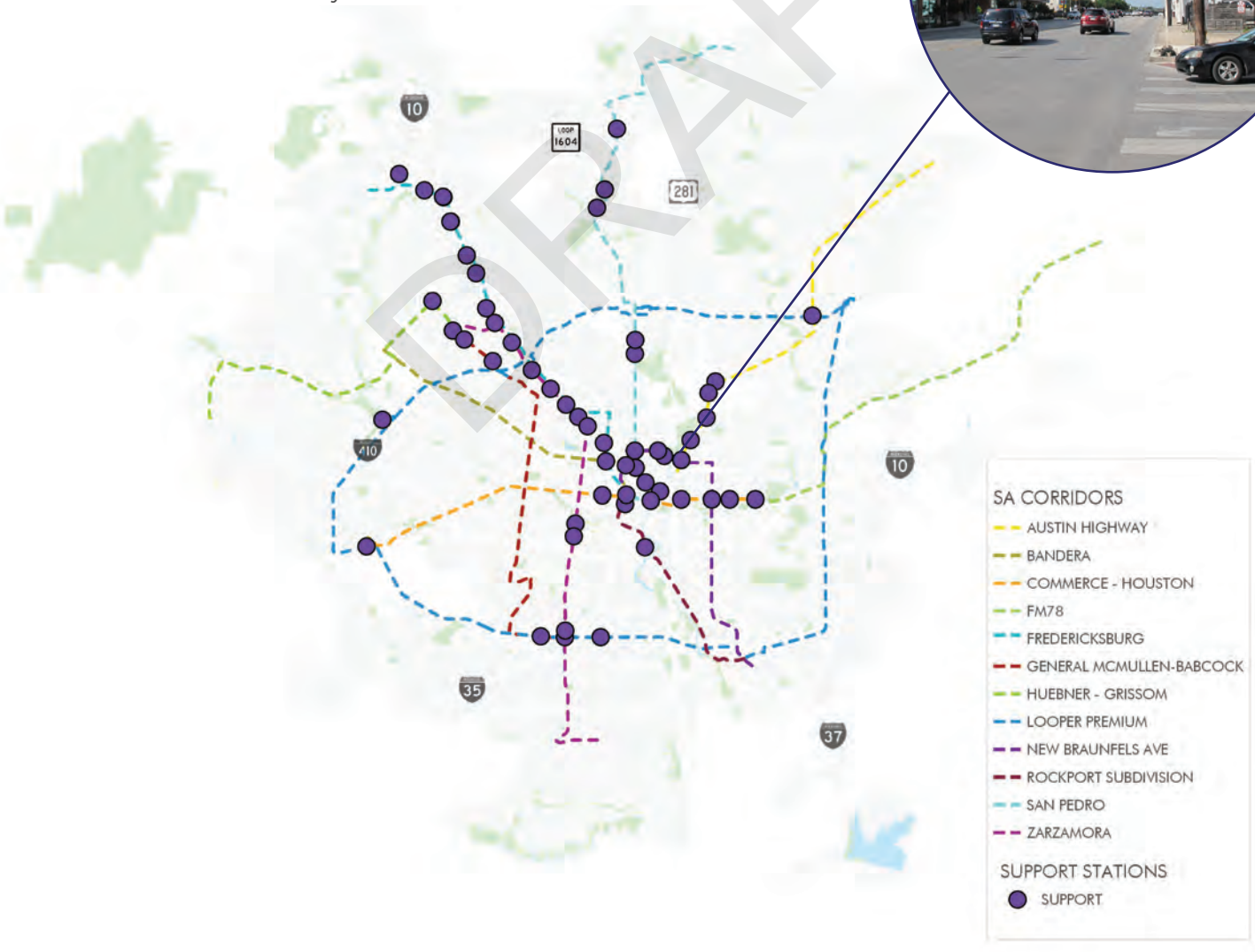
SUPPORT CLUSTER

Support strategies are often less intensive but targeted for communities that are clearly "TSLU ready" with strong private market support, existing quality urban form, and/or high levels of transit service. The goal of TSLU investment is to support added infill and higher density than what the market might achieve on its own – but with more limited and/or strategic investments including workforce and affordable housing, added employment opportunity, and public amenities such as plazas, and enhanced streetscapes.

PEARL STATION

A transit-supportive Urban Center in a strong market with full package of incentives available. Actions at this station should reinforce investment potential along the Broadway corridor and to the west via active streetscapes to pedestrianize both sides of the U.S. Hwy 281 divide.





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USING THE TYPOLOGY

The TSLU typology is a powerful tool for understanding station areas. It presents planners, elected officials, and the public with a clear understanding of existing conditions in proposed station areas and the best strategies for encouraging transit-supportive development. The TSLU typology works best when considered in the context of market strength, urban form, and VIA's station types. The example below shows how this information comes together to provide a quick, efficient snapshot of a station area.

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TYPOLOGY

Station Type

COMMUNITY CORRIDOR

Urban Form

TRANSIT-ADJACENT
▶ **TRANSIT-RELATED**
TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE

Market Strength

STRONG
▶ **TRANSITIONAL**
STATIC

TRANSIT READINESS

Zoning

Infrastructure

Market

STRATEGIC GUIDANCE

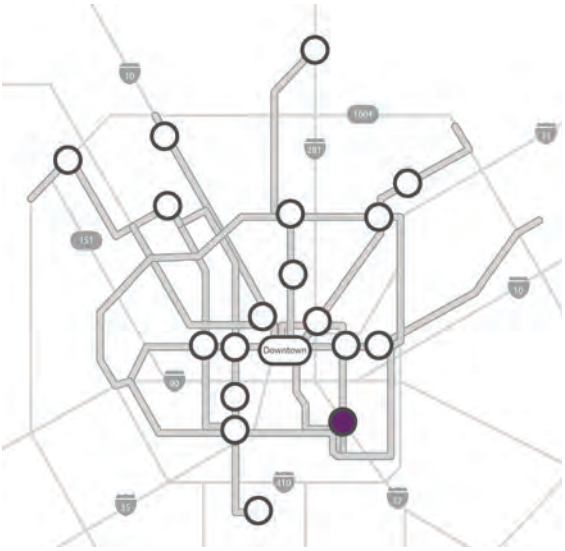
Strategy Cluster:

NURTURE
▶ **CATALYZE**
SUPPORT

Adjacent to a recent shopping center development, Maurine Station is identified as a transit related community corridor in a transitional market. Encourage infill including mall re-positioning with emphasis on urban place-making.

MAURINE STATION

NEW BRAUNFELS AVE CORRIDOR



For more information about this station and all 18 concept stations, see the SA Corridors *Station Area Concepts* and *Station Area Plans.*

STATION TYPES AND CORRIDOR STRATEGY CLUSTERS			
Station Type	NURTURE	CATALYZE	SUPPORT
Central Station	• Initiate station district planning • Prioritize 24/7 public safety • ID & land bank key opportunity sites	• Complete core transit infrastructure • Structure opportunities for joint TOD • Initiate mixed-use catalyst project	• Incent high-density residential, major employment & convenience retail • Facilitate efficient transport but with emphasis on pedestrian connectivity
Urban Center	• Initiate town center planning in cooperation with local stakeholders • ID & land bank pivotal vacant or underutilized properties	• Invest in urban-scale transportation & pedestrian connectivity • Secure development for catalyst site	• Incent conversion of excess surface parking footprint to mixed-use • Incent work force / affordable housing & commercial space reuse
Community Corridor	• Work with business & neighborhood groups for transit-oriented services • Support corridor planning initiatives • ID & land bank key opportunity sites	• Invest in high-quality transit stations • Structure opportunities for joint TOD in immediate proximity to station(s)	• Complete TODs that adjoin stations • Incent infill residential, commercial & mixed-use development • Plan/adopt district parking program
Neighborhood Main Street	• Work with business & neighborhood groups • Support Main Street planning & marketing • ID key sites w/interested owners	• Invest in high quality stations • Provide funding to incent business & home improvements • Secure reuse/infill of catalyst site	• Incent infill residential, commercial & mixed-use development • Support equity/affordability initiative • Plan/adopt district parking program
Commuter Station	• Plan for long-term re-use • Develop commuter parking suitable for later conversion to urban uses • ID & land bank key opportunity sites	• Invest in urban-scale transportation & pedestrian connectivity • Secure joint TOD for catalyst site proximate to the commuter station	• Begin to convert surface parking to mixed-use & structured parking @ reduced ratios • Incent higher density mixed-use development proximate to station
Downtown Stop	• Work with business & neighborhood groups for transit-oriented services • ID & land bank key opportunity sites	• Provide funding to incent business , home & pedestrian improvements • Secure development for catalyst site	• Incent infill residential, commercial & mixed-used development • Plan/adopt district parking program

= *Most likely existing condition* = *Moderately likely condition* = *Least likely existing condition*

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TOOLS FOR IMPLEMENTING TSLU

The preceding chapters discussed the state of TSLU in San Antonio, and a new way of prioritizing investments in proposed and existing station areas. Chapter 4 builds on this information and provides a range of strategies for incentivizing transit-supportive development. These strategies can be broadly divided into the following types:

- **Station Area Planning** – Together with associated zoning, design and development standards, and/or expedited permitting.
- **Development Incentives -** Building on the range of tools already available in the City of San Antonio and suggestions for additional tools.
- **Affordable Housing** - Strategies tailored to existing market strength. These may include tools for affordable housing preservation and production of new units in mixed income projects.
- **Infrastructure Investment** – Station facilities, nearby pedestrian, streetscape, access management, and traffic improvements.

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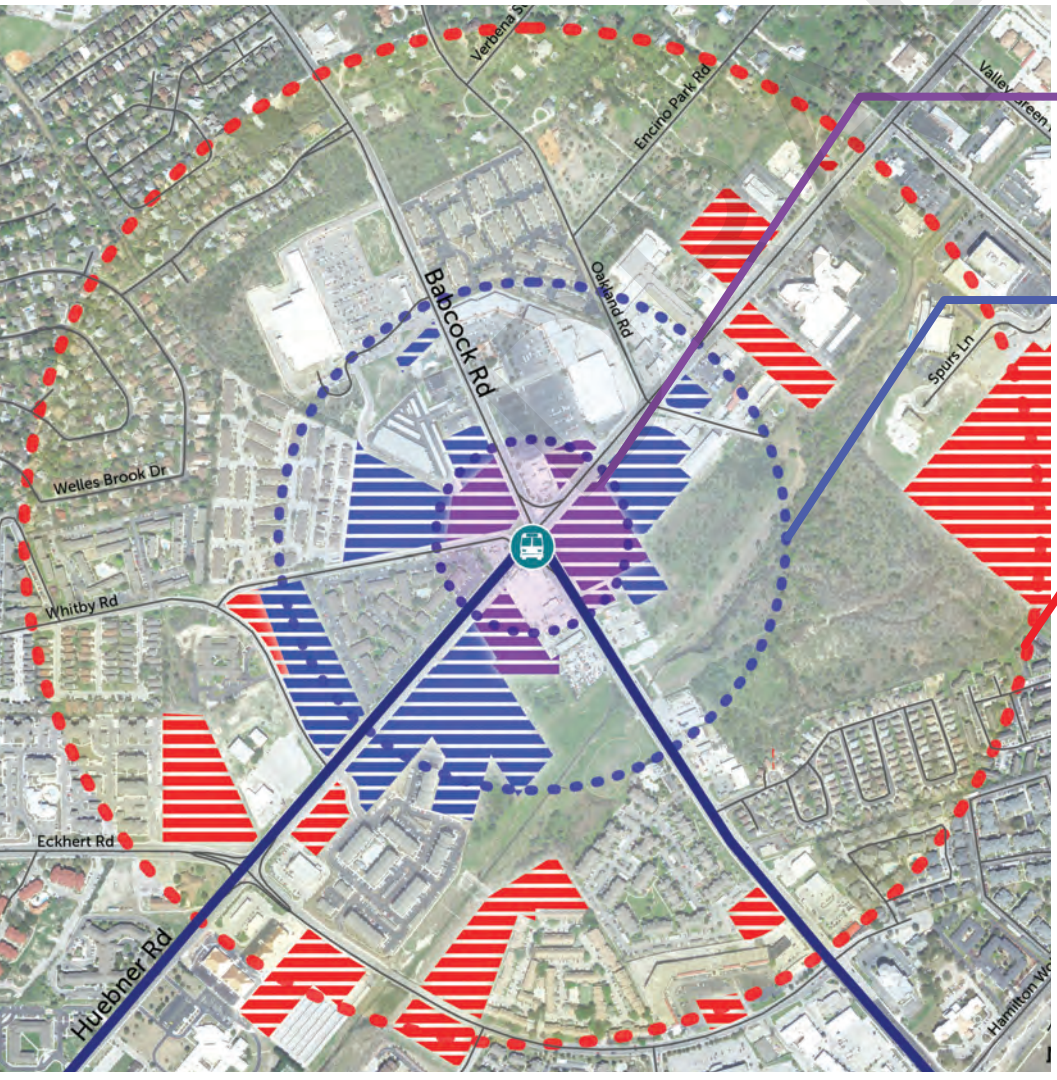
TSLU Vision for the Five Points station area

TOD SPECIAL DISTRICT

San Antonio's TOD Special District regulations are meant to specifically address the need for denser development around transit stations. Rather than replacing existing zoning, developers or property owners can "opt-in" to the TOD Special District in lieu of their existing base zone. That means that developers working on properties located within 1/4 mile of a "transit station" can request that TOD Special District standards apply to their development project, rather than the standards offered in their property's base zone.

The district works by delineating different sub-zones or distance bands relative to the location of a transit station. Different zoning and parking regulations apply in each of these distance bands. Developers or property owners request re-zoning as a precondition for constructing a new project, so zone changes happen incrementally as development and redevelopment occurs. A conceptual example of how this process might play out, with redeveloped parcels highlighted, is shown below.



TOD-NMS-C1

Core 1: Area within 500 feet of a transit station. Greatest intensity and mix of uses should be focused here.

TOD-NMS-C2

Core 2: Area between 500 feet and 1/4 mile from station.

TOD-NMS-P

Periphery: Area between 1/4 mile and 1/2 mile. Here intensity should step down to reflect longer walking distance to the transit station.

TOD ZONE STRING:

TOD-NMS-C2

- TOD DISTRICT
- STATION TYPE
- DISTANCE BAND

A MORE POWERFUL TOOL FOR TOD

The TOD Special District is an opt-in alternative to existing base zoning, but to-date no developer has successfully developed a property with this alternative zoning. The reason for this is likely that there is not currently a large enough incentive for developers to make the switch.

The table below shows existing TOD Special district standards. Note that without a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR*), maximum densities for residential uses (column C) are at or below the minimum threshold (40 units per acre) that is typically considered transit-supportive. Moreover, many existing multifamily zones (MF-33, MF-40, MF-50, etc) already allow densities at or above the maximums in column C.

EXISTING TOD SPECIAL DISTRICT STANDARDS							
	(A) SIZE	(B) MIN. DENSITY (UPA)	(C) MAX DENSITY (UPA)	(D) MAX DENSITY W/ TDR*	(E) MIN. FAR	(F) MAX FAR	(G) MAX FAR W/ TDR*
TOD-C	Less than 2 acres	16	40	80	2.5	6.0	12.0
	2 acres or more	12	36	72	2.0	4.0	6.0
TOD-P	Less than 2 acres	12	36	70	1.5	4.0	6.0
	2 acres or more	8	32	60	1.0	2.0	4.0

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The TOD Special District provides a good framework for incentivizing transit-supportive development. However, it will need to undergo some minor changes in order to be effective in practice. The recommendations that follow seek to make the TOD Special District into a more powerful tool - a tool that will help close the feasibility gap for developers and incentivize more development in places with fast, efficient transit service - a focus of many of the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan goals highlighted on page 4 of this document.

In addition to changes to the TOD District's density standards, changes to its locational criteria will be extremely important. Currently, the UDC broadly defines areas within 1/4 mile of a "transit station" as the locational criteria for this zone. As the TOD Special District becomes a more powerful tool, its geographic scope will have to be refined. Too narrow an application might result in very few transit-supportive projects while applying it too broadly may dillute its ability to incentivize dense development near high capacity or rapid transit.

**TDR, or Transfer of Development Rights, is a mechanism whereby the density of development allowed on a "sending" site is purchased and transferred to a "receiving" site. This allows additional development on the "receiving" site.*

TOD SPECIAL DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

San Antonio's TOD Special District is a major asset to furthering TSLU in the City's transit corridors. However, it has several major shortcomings that should be addressed if it is to become a well-used tool to encourage transit-supportive development.

Designate TOD Special District Areas

The City of San Antonio should adopt specific TOD Special District boundaries based on planned and existing locations of VIA Rapid Transit stations. These should include any existing Primo stations as well as proposed stations in advanced stages of planning. VIA is currently in advanced stages of planning four rapid transit routes. Within the next two years, they will begin applying for federal funding to build one of these four routes. It is at this time - when a preferred mode, alignment, and stations have been identified - that the City of San Antonio should designate new TOD Special District areas.

Adjust Density Maximums and Parking Minimums

Increasing density and encouraging less parking near transit stations is not just good policy - it also makes financial sense. One of the major reasons that TOD districts have not been more widely opted-into by developers is because there is not a good enough incentive to do so. Development feasibility in station areas will be greatly improved and the TOD district will become more ubiquitous if density maximums are increased and parking ratios are decreased. Detailed pro-forma testing of different transit-supportive building types produced the recommendations in the table below.

TOD DISTRICT PROPOSED DENSITY MAXIMUMS			
Station Type	TOD-C1	TOD-C2	TOD-P
Urban Center (UC)	115 UPA (12 FAR)	115 UPA (12 FAR)	115 UPA (6 FAR)
Community Corridor (CC)	115 UPA (6 FAR)	55 UPA (4 FAR)	45 UPA (3 FAR)
Neighborhood Main Street (NMS)	60 UPA (4 FAR)	55 UPA (4 FAR)	45 UPA (3 FAR)
Commuter Station (CS)	55 UPA (4 FAR)	40 UPA (3 FAR)	40 UPA (2 FAR)

TOD DISTRICT PROPOSED MINIMUM PARKING REQUIREMENTS (% OF STANDARD REQUIREMENT)			
Station Type	TOD-C1	TOD-C2	TOD-P
Urban Center (UC)	0%	0%	0%
Community Corridor (CC)	0%	50%	75%
Neighborhood Main Street (NMS)	0%	50%	75%
Commuter Station (CS)	0%	75%	75%

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ADDITIONAL ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to a new and improved TOD Special District, the City of San Antonio should make additional strategic changes to the UDC. They include the following:

Expedite Permitting in Station Areas

The City of San Antonio requires site plan review for development proposals requesting IDZ and TOD special district zoning. This requirement adds time and complexity to an already complex process. The SA Corridors Future Land Use Map (FLUM) will provide the City with a reference against which to measure the transit-supportiveness of development proposals. The City should consider waiving the site planning requirements currently included in both the IDZ and TOD zoning standards for development proposals in designated station areas that support the FLUM. Any changes that can increase the speed and reliability of permitting for projects the city deems transit-supportive will further incentivize private investment in station areas.

Waive Traffic Impact Analysis Requirements in TOD Districts

Traffic impact analysis (TIA) is typically undertaken to determine rough proportionality of the impact that a new development is likely to have on surrounding roadways. Currently, the TOD Special District requires an assessment of trip generation from a project and an assurance that the project will not cause surrounding roadways to exhibit below level of service (LOS) "E" during peak hours. It is recommended that the City of San Antonio consider waiving this requirement for the TOD Special District as is done with IDZ and D zones. TOD districts, by their nature, will be designated in close proximity to rapid transit thus reducing the need for costly TIAs.

Extend IDZ to Station Areas

Currently the Infill Development Zone (IDZ) is only available to property owners in the Community Revitalization Action Group (CRAG) area. IDZ provides flexibility in terms of parking standards, setbacks, and density maximums and tends to produce transit-supportive development. The City of San Antonio should consider extending IDZ to station areas in conjunction with the TOD Special District to provide a broader range of tools for developers.

Apply IDZ Standards for Small-Scale Infill

The TOD Special District, as currently defined in the UDC, provides very little clarity in terms of lot size requirements and compatibility with existing uses. While more intense development will bolster VIA's investment in rapid transit, it should be focused on strategically situated sites. Smaller infill parcels on block faces that are primarily single-family residential in nature should be subject to compatibility standards similar to those that currently exist in IDZ. Specifically, ***Sec. 35-343(c) - Sec. 35-343(m)*** of the UDC.

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INCENTIVES

San Antonio already has a deep bench of development incentives. In general, incentives are focused much more on employment than housing and tend to be concentrated in the central city. The following recommendations suggest improvements to existing incentives or suggest additional tools for consideration.

Expand Incentives Beyond the Central City

Tools that to-date have been clearly focused toward San Antonio's urban core will need to become more widely available. Programs that can be applied most directly at the discretion of the City are also the most constrained geographically. Examples are the **Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ), Inner City Reinvestment / Infill Policy (ICRIP), Center City Housing Incentive Policy (CCHIP), Community Revitalization Action Group (CRAG)**, **Promise Zone**, and **Choice Neighborhood** programs. Similar tools are likely to be needed if TSLU is to become a reality along suburban corridors and at the urban fringe – especially for pioneering higher density residential and infill projects.

One example of such a policy is Portland's TOD Property Tax Abatement Program. The program seeks to reduce operating cost of TOD projects through 10-year tax abatements - similar to San Antonio's existing CCHIP program. It considers properties on vacant or underutilized sites in transit corridors whose design and features encourage transit ridership.

Vacant Dwelling Tax Credit

Promoting re-use and renovation of 1-4 unit residential structures, particularly in the "nurture" cluster, can be an impactful strategy for stabilizing real estate markets and preventing displacement. Vacant dwelling property tax credits are designed to encourage renovation and reuse of existing vacant properties. The tax credit typically provides 100% protection from property tax increases with an incremental reduction of that protection over 5-10 years.

TSLU Grant Programs

Several cities and regions have developed small, but effective grant programs to directly fund projects that meet certain TSLU goals. Seattle's Transit-Oriented Community Development Fund provides grants and loans to private developers who seek to build mixed-use, commercial, and multifamily developments in and around high capacity transit stations. In Portland, METRO regional government operates a TOD Implementation Program funded by federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) dollars that provides small cash infusions of ~$300,000 to qualifying projects.

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AFFORDABLE HOUSING PRESERVATION (NURTURE/CATALYZE)

As neighborhoods become more desirable and appreciate in value, it is often the existing residents, primarily renters, who experience housing cost increases. The City of San Antonio and VIA should consider the potential for displacement when planning significant new public investments like rapid transit. They should encourage early and meaningful involvement of community members in prioritizing needs and redevelopment plans. Most importantly, the City of San Antonio should use incentives and policy tools to keep existing residents from being displaced.

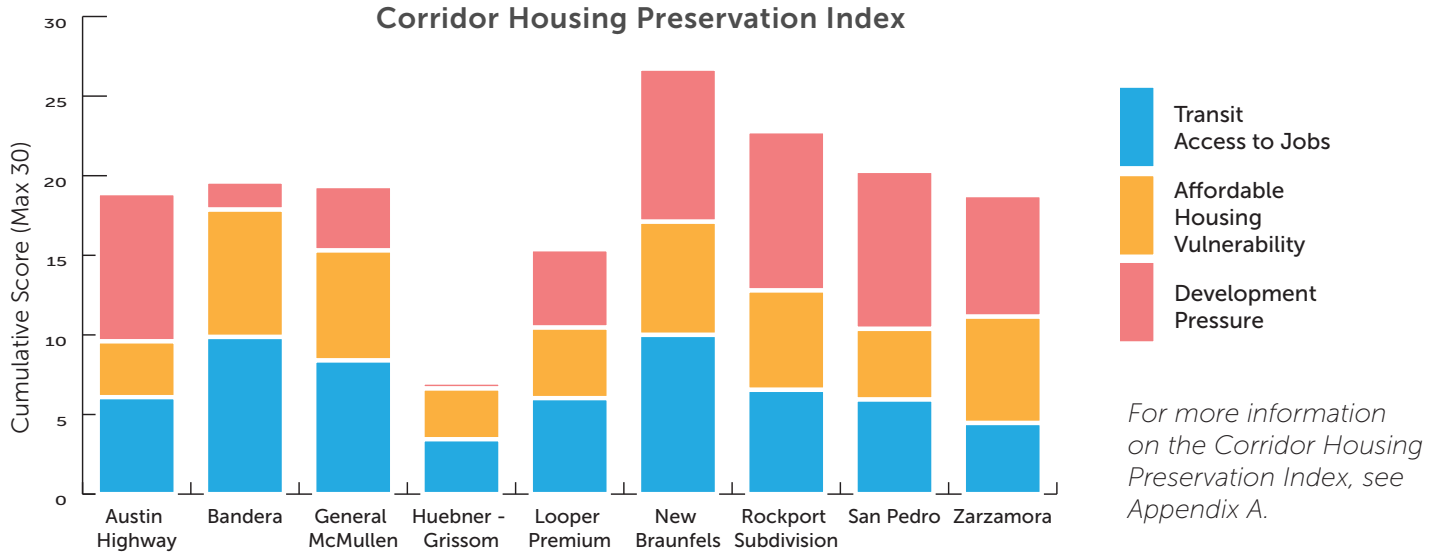
Land Banking

The City of San Antonio should engage in land banking in proposed station areas as VIA selects preferred alignments and modes for its rapid transit lines. This should be done before transit service is implemented to avoid speculative increases in land costs. In Denver, the Urban Land Concervance (ULC) is using this approach to preserve affordable housing in urban areas to ensure their continued benefit to the community.

Affordable Housing Reserve Fund

The largest source of affordable housing in most cities is older, Class B and Class C apartments. These properties are also often the first to be redeveloped when markets improve. Such apartments in existing and proposed station areas are of particular concern as they are ideally located for transit-dependent residents. The City of San Antonio should consider developing a reserve fund for purchasing strategically located multifamily properties before they are redeveloped.

The chart below shows the relative strategic value of acquiring mutlifamily properties in San Antonio's transit corridors. Ideally, the City should focus its efforts in corridors with a high number of vulnerable units without long term affordability protection and low development pressure.



For more information on the Corridor Housing Preservation Index, see Appendix A.

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AFFORDABLE HOUSING PRODUCTION (CATALYZE/SUPPORT)

In areas where development is already occurring, it may not be appropriate to engage in some of the affordable housing preservation activities described in the previous section. Rather, the focus should be on incentivizing affordable housing production. While building affordable housing into a market-rate project can be expensive, there are ways to provide the development community with incentives that further numerous transit-supportive land use goals including higher density and a greater mix of housing types at different price points.

Inclusionary Zoning and the Density Bonus

Inclusionary zoning requires or incentivizes developers to include below-market rate housing in their projects. Though mandatory inclusionary zoning is expressly prohibited by Texas state law, cities can offer voluntary inclusionary zoning policies such as incentives that make it economically beneficial for developers to provide a certain percentage of their units as affordable.

One example of voluntary inclusionary zoning is called a density bonus. Many cities use density bonuses to offer additional height or density to developers in exchange for affordable housing or fees-in-lieu. The City of San Antonio's UDC already includes a density bonus policy, however it is little-used and often overlooked by developers. There are two reasons for the bonus program's lack of success: the incentive to include affordable housing does not outweigh its expense and the City does not offer a fee-in-lieu alternative.

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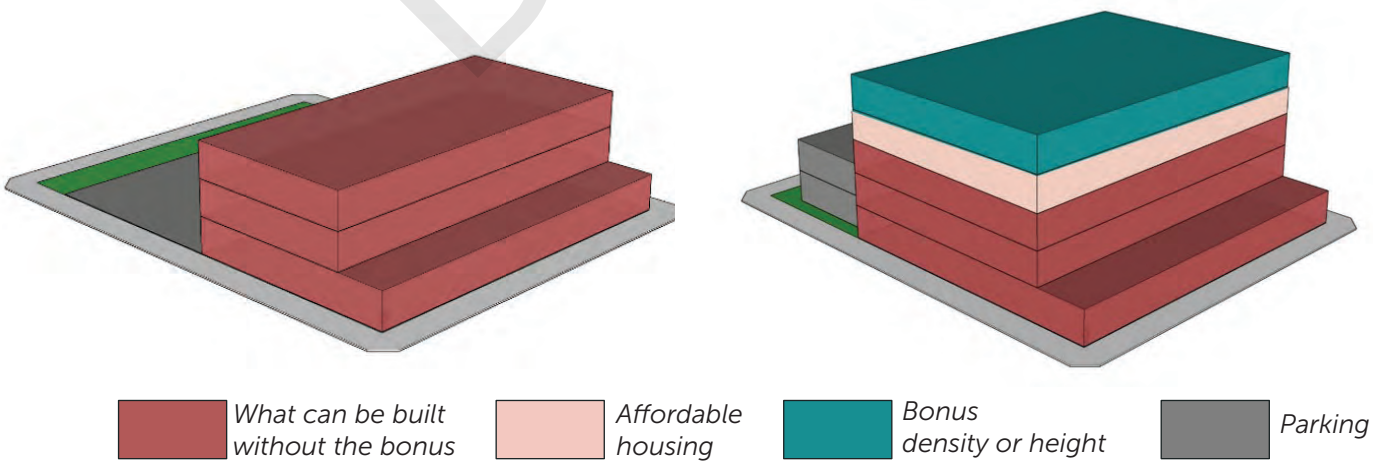
HOW DOES A DENSITY BONUS WORK?



DENSITY BONUS RECOMMENDATIONS

The existing density bonus structure, as set forth in the Unified Development Code (UDC) is below. The City of San Antonio defines two below-market household income segments: low income and very low income. These are defined by a commonly-used benchmark, Area Median Income (AMI). For reference, the Area Median Income for the San Antonio-New Braunfels metro area was $63,500 in 2016. The density bonus structure works by providing increased density (column B) in exchange for a percent of total units being offered at rents affordable for low and very low income households (column A).

EXISTING UDC DENSITY BONUS		
Below-Market Segment	A: Set-Aside (% of total units)	B: Density Bonus (% UPA increase)
Low Income (80% AMI)	10%	20%
Very Low Income (50% AMI)	5%	10%

Setting the bonus at a level that will incentivize affordable housing is not a simple exercise. If the bonus is too low, as it is today, no affordable housing will be produced. However, if the bonus is set too high, the City will essentially be giving away extra density without adding affordable housing to station areas. In order to incentivize production within mixed income projects, the City of San Antonio should adjust the density bonus structure as shown in the table below.

TOD DISTRICT PROPOSED DENSITY BONUS		
Below-Market Segment	A: Set-Aside (% of total units)	B: Density Bonus (% UPA increase)
Low Income (80% AMI)	5%	20%*
Very Low Income (50% AMI)	10%	30%

** 10% bonus for each additional 5% set-aside, not to exceed 50% total bonus*

The above figures are the result of an economic analysis of different construction types and was tested using real estate pro-forma. It should be noted that this bonus is intended to be implemented in the TOD Special District, to help meet one of SA Corridors' key TSLU goals. However, this bonus structure could be implemented within other zones where appropriate.

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FUNDING TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

In addition to creating jobs and a full range of market-rate to affordable housing, added priority should be given to place-making investments. As is often the case, redevelopment tools in San Antonio tend to be aimed at getting specific projects market feasible – with less attention given to the quality of urban design and overall neighborhood/community enhancements. TSLU is not just about the number of added jobs or housing units, but about also enhancing the quality of the overall neighborhood environment or places in which they are located. To accomplish this, VIA and the City of San Antonio need to coordinate their efforts. If the two are not in sync, the effectiveness of VIA's transit investment will suffer.

TCI & the Capital Bond

Since 2014, the City of San Antonio (COSA) has operated a Transportation and Capital Improvements (TCI) Department responsible for building and maintaining and maintain San Antonio's infrastructure. TCI consolidates the functions of the former Departments of Public Works and Capital Improvements Management Services.

Integral to the TCI program was the May 2017 approval by San Antonio voters to fund $850 million in bonding to transportation and capital improvements over the 2017-22 period. Of this amount over half ($445 million) is allocated for 64 transportation projects including street, bridge and sidewalk improvements. The remainder includes drainage/flood control, parks-related, library/cultural, public safety and neighborhood improvements.

VIA Investments

As of August 2016, investments by VIA Metropolitan Transit are driven by its Long Range Plan as part of VIA Vision 2040. A key priority of the plan is to make San Antonio "a walkable urban city with public transit at its core." Creating a Rapid Transit Network involving BRT and LRT systems is pivotal to plan implementation.

Funding for plan implementation is expected to come via a combination of sources including:

- Increased federal funding bringing San Antonio on par with other peer transit agencies in Texas.
- State funding focused on capital investments (as operating funds are not available).
- Increased local funding which currently which has been primarily from sales tax sources (though VIA currently receives less sales tax revenue per resident than peer agencies statewide).

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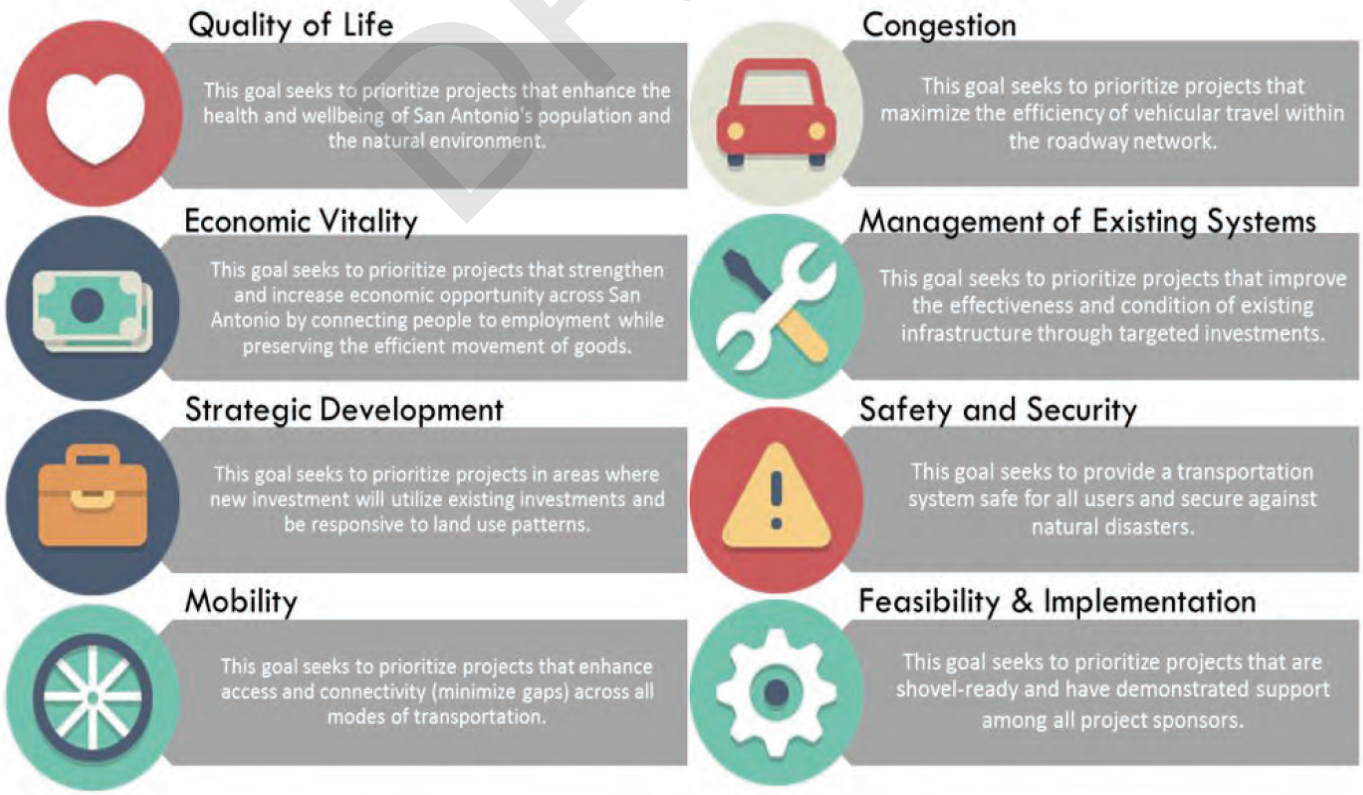
PRIORITIZING TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

The SA Tomorrow Multimodal Transportation Plan set forth criteria by which proposed infrastructure improvements should be evaluated for inclusion in the City's Capital Improvement Plan. Those criteria, shown below, seek to objectively rank potential public infrastructure investments by how well they match with objective performance measures.

The SA Tomorrow prioritization tool is a robust framework, and it does provide some preferential scoring for transit-supportive infrastructure:

- "Improve access on high ridership transit routes"
- "Address pedestrian connectivity"
- "Enhance connectivity of street network"
- "Transportation that supports infill development"

In light of VIA's planned investments in high capacity transit, there may be ways to strengthen and add aditional criteria to better position projects that demonstrate transit-supportive principles, specifically in areas that have or will have high capacity transit service. The City should consider adding additional criteria including elements that strengthen connections to station platforms and projects located in existing Primo or proposed high capacity transit stations or corridors.



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TIMELINE FOR VIA/COSA COORDINATION

In order to align infrastructure investments with the implementation of high capacity transit, VIA and the City will need to work closely to coordinate their planning efforts. One major milestone to consider is the development of the 2022 General Obligation Bond. The table below shows a proposed schedule for coordination between VIA and the City of San Antonio leading up to the next bond proposal. These reocmmendations are provided here at a high level and are intended to serve only as a conceptual framework. Further coordination between VIA and the City of San Antonio, including a memorandum of understanding (MOU) are needed before such activities can take place.

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Time Horizon	Schedule to Develop 2022 Bond	Coordination Actions
2017-2020	Project concept development: VIA AA, COSA Corridors, Placemaking, Walkable Communities	Early outreach – public awareness campaign to public, council, and key stakeholders regarding transit and walkable communities
2019	Establish Bond Criteria and Categories	Include Transit-Supportiveness, Walkability, Support of Non-Motorized Travel as Criteria/ Category factors. Consider Pedestrian Priority Areas
Fall 2020	City staff and key partners (such as VIA) identify projects for possible inclusion in the bond	VIA, AAMPO and COSA DPCD and TCI coordinate to identify transit-supportive projects for key corridors, including first RTC Corridor and Primo Corridors • Identify criteria to support project prioritization • Consider use of /adaptation of existing TCI project prioritization process and tool • Consider Use of MyLink data, Envision Tomorrow model
2021	• Set up Citizen Bond Committees (one committee for each Bond category) • Will begin meeting Fall 2021 • For 2017 Bond, the Citizen Bond Committees held 25 meetings and participated in five tours from October 2016 to December 2016 to discuss potential projects and developed a list of recommended projects.	Set up Workshop to Review Vision 2040 and VIA AA Results with Citizen Bond Committees • Review of process • Link to Comprehensive Plan and MMTP goals • Establish value to community including those that don't expect to use transit.
2022	Committees submit their list of recommended projects to the Mayor and City Council for consideration in January, 2022	

CHANGING THE VIA/CITY OF SAN ANTONIO PARADIGM

The City of San Antonio and VIA have made great strides in recent years. Downtown San Antonio is undergoing a renaissance that includes the Pearl and many close-in neighborhoods. VIA's Primo service and express bus system have proven that demand for high quality rapid transit exists in this region. However, the region remains transit under-served relative to its peers in Texas and nationally. Going forward, the City of San Antonio and VIA will need to work together to encourage transit-supportive development, implement high quality transit service, and provide transit-supportive infrastructure to match.

Among the options available, three inter-related actions are recommended for consideration to better align TCI and capital bonding with VIA Investment priorities:

- Directly incorporate transit-supportive improvements as part of the TCI program. This would be a logical and natural extension of existing funding commitments for pedestrian and streetscape improvements, albeit with a more explicit TSLU focus with future project initiatives. While the projects included in the 2017-22 bond have already been selected, TCI should look for opportunities to prioritize projects that support the preferred alignment that emerges from VIA's Rapid Transit Corridor Study.

- Approach the voters for transit and TOD capital funding support. This could occur with a voter measure posed directly by VIA or as part of a subsequent phase (e.g., 2022-27) COSA bond initiative. This is an approach successfully being taken by other cities, recognizing that reliance on state/federal funding alone may not be adequate to address local priorities. For example, Atlanta, Los Angeles, and Seattle are cities where voters approved ballot measures for transportation improvements focused on public transit in 2016. Oklahoma City is an example of a major transit investment packaged as part of the third round of a voter approved sales tax funded capital program. In addition to the transit investment, OKC MAPS3 projects include funding for convention center, downtown public park, fairgrounds, senior health/wellness, river, trail and sidewalk improvements.

- Encourage more active public/private partnerships with direct COSA/VIA participation or priority TSLU initiatives. Especially at stations characterized by static or transitional market support, public sector leadership is essential to "prime the pump" with actions ranging from station area/TSLU planning and re-zoning to land assembly in preparation for future development. While both COSA and VIA should expect to be involved, the lead role may vary depending on station location, opportunities and resources available.

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RELATED SA CORRIDORS DOCUMENTS

Introduction and Executive Summary
An overview of the project and a guide to supporting documents

Future Land Use and Corridor Profiles
Profiles and future land use recommendations for each of the 12 SA Corridors.

Station Area Concepts
Overview of future land use and recommended strategies for sixteen station areas:

- *Airport Station*
- *EastPoint*
- *Fresno Ave.*
- *Gen. McMullen*
- *Malone Ave.*
- *Maurine Ave.*
- *Nacogdoches/ Thousand Oaks*
- *Pearl Station*
- *Perrin-Beitel*
- *Rogers Road*
- *SouthPark Mall*
- *Stone Oak*
- *Texas A&M*
- *UTSA*
- *Willow Springs*
- *Zarzamora*

Station Area Plans
Detailed station area plan documents for two stations:

- *Huebner/Babcock*
- *Five Points*

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SA CORRIDORS