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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction
Houston’s population is growing and changing in significant ways and Houston METRO is transforming its transit network to better meet the needs of the region, now and into the future. As this transformation occurs, many Houston residents – new and old – are seeking more walkable neighborhoods with access to quality transit. The Center for Transit Oriented Development estimated that demand for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) will represent at least one quarter of the US housing market by 2030. As demand increases, property values are rising, and large parcels of vacant land are redeveloping all over Houston, often as denser, mixed use projects that seek to meet the market demand.

The completion of METRO’s Red, Purple and Green light rail transit lines and the implementation of the New Bus Network presents an opportunity to build upon those infrastructure and service improvements in the community and help realize more sustainable development that encourages walking, biking and transit usage throughout the Houston area. These new investments and infrastructure are key starting points for enhancing urban and suburban communities with TOD, as transit is one of the region’s assets that can be used to stimulate economic growth and durable, high return development. Partnerships and communication with public and private entities will be vital to ensure the success of these transit investments, and in turn will help developers create more value from their own investments.

Purpose of the Study
METRO initiated the TOD study as a framework to identify and encourage new development opportunities around METRORail stations and Park & Ride lots. The primary objective of the Study is to determine opportunities for TOD in the area of METRORail stations and regional Park & Ride lots which, if fully realized, will benefit from the region’s investments in transit as evidenced by increased patronage. The key resources developed through this study will include:

- A marketing tool that METRO can take to developers to let them know what type of opportunities can be successful at specific METRORail stations and Park & Ride lots;
- An initial market assessment at each of these locations; and
- Recommended actions that METRO, City of Houston, H-GAC and others should consider to improve development opportunities.

What is TOD?
TOD varies based on the unique qualities of communities. To maximize the potential for implementation, it will be important for METRO and other stakeholders to define what TOD means for specific transit facilities and the surrounding neighborhoods. For purposes of this report, TOD is broadly defined as development that includes a mix of residential, commercial, and institutional uses that is designed to maximize transportation options, including walking, biking, and transit. TOD rethinks how we plan, fund, and build our communities in a manner that combines sustainable community planning practices, constructive development partnerships, and intelligent transportation choices. It can consist entirely of new development or infill development within existing neighborhoods, usually with a focus on the area within a half mile of a transit facility (about a ten minute walk).

1 “Hidden in Plain Sight,” Center for Transit Oriented Development, 2006
Figure ES-1: Southeast Corridor LRT
TOD can occur at a wide range of scales and types of uses – from dense residential and office skyscrapers to small-lot, single-family homes – but typically includes a well-connected street network, safe accessibility by pedestrians and bicyclists, high quality transit service, and a balanced mix of uses that can satisfy the daily retail and service needs of residents and workers. In short, successful TOD must be compact with a focus on density and neighborhood walkability, connected both internally and externally with other major destinations, and development must be considerate of the human-scale and pedestrian environment. The goal is to surround transit facilities with vibrant, well designed neighborhoods where people can live, work, shop, and enjoy entertainment, all within a safe and pleasant walk to transit.

Why TOD?

**BENEFITS**

TOD offers substantial benefits to community residents, developers, the local economy, public agencies and the transit system. Successful TOD can result in economic, transportation, health, and community benefits. By consistently identifying and communicating these benefits, METRO and other stakeholders can support the implementation policies and programs that will make TOD more likely to occur. The information below and in Table ES-1 identifies more specific benefits in each of these areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table ES-1: TOD Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOD Benefits</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Offers a higher return on investment for developers and financial institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Better connects people and jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Expands the range of housing options and retail types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Generates new jobs, entrepreneurship, increased spending, tax revenues, and other economic spillover effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Expands choice of travel modes, decreasing automobile reliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increases transit ridership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Helps the transit system maximize service efficiencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Helps reduce traffic congestion on major roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health and Safety</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increases physical activity by encouraging walking and bicycling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Improves air quality from reduced emissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Improves safety from reduced crash rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increases property values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Helps stabilize neighborhoods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lowers transportation costs allowing redirected spending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Conserves land</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Leeland/Third Ward Station

Station Overview

**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

**DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE & AND DEVELOPMENT DRIVERS**
- Changing demographics in the station area are resulting in increases in effective buying income of nearby households.
- Demand for housing from Downtown, EaDo, the University of Houston, and Texas Southern University is spilling over into the station area.
- Approximately 66 percent of the households in the station area are one to two person households.
- Renter-occupied housing makes up approximately 52 percent of the total number of occupied housing units.

**DEVELOPMENT TRENDS & POTENTIAL**

**SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING**
- Based on re-plat applications filed with the City of Houston, 258 new single family homes could potentially be constructed in the next one to two years.
- Newly constructed single-family units are expected to sell from $225,000 to $300,000 depending on the size and amenities, with an average closer to $275,000.
- Single family townhome average sale price per square foot is increasing rapidly – 70 percent from 2012 to 2014.
- Demand for residential property is likely to increase steadily over the next few years.

**MULTI-FAMILY AND STUDENT HOUSING**
- The potential market for multi-family and student housing within the CMA is driven by the increasing enrollments at the University of Houston Main Campus and Texas Southern University.
- It is estimated that 4,488 new housing units will need to be constructed in the CMA by 2020 to meet the current trend of population growth and persons per housing unit.
- Approximately 62 percent or 2,550 will be renter-occupied units by 2020.
- There are currently 576 units under construction or planned. Approximately 1,976 units are needed to meet the projections by 2020.

**RETAIL**
- The Leeland/Third Ward Station area is likely within the next two to five years.
- Commercial developers may end up competing with residential developers when bidding on retail redevelopment sites near the Leeland/Third Ward Station.

**DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**
- Refer to Table ES-2
# SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

## INFRASTRUCTURE
- Adding signed bike lanes to Elgin and connecting with bike lanes along Cullen Boulevard will provide direct bike connectivity from the station.
- Gaps within the sidewalk network should be addressed by filling in missing links within the study area.
- Enclose drainage in areas where needed.
- Bike parking and bike storage could be incorporated into designs for new developments.

## NEXT STEPS
- Revise and update METRO’s existing TOD Goals and Strategies to include action driven new strategies for METRO Board approval to authorize staff to better pursue TOD opportunities.
- Work with the City of Houston to evaluate and coordinate parking requirement updates in Chapter 26 with the City of Houston to encourage greater use of land and TOD development opportunities (ex: create parking benefit districts around rail stations).
- Coordinate with the City of Houston and developers to evaluate and strengthen Chapter 42 of the City’s Land Development Ordinances to further encourage development that encourages transit supportive corridors.
- Work with H-GAC to align project evaluation and funding levels for the TIP to support TOD projects
- Further coordinate with the City of Houston’s Economic Development Department to develop framework for a TOD Pilot project.
- Support prioritization of capital projects that would improve multimodal access to key transit nodes (ex: grants or City of Houston ReBuild Houston funding).
- Long-term actions are the actual joint development activities: finding partners, lease agreements, development designs, and construction. Work with stakeholders (such as HUD, City of Houston Housing Authority, the Hospital District, and CDCs) in the development of transit supportive, mixed-use development that include affordable housing opportunities.
# Table ES-2: Development Opportunity Sites Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>CURRENT USE</th>
<th>PROPOSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Northwest corner of Coyle and Scott Streets</td>
<td>Area is currently being used for residential purposes. There is also vacant land throughout the location</td>
<td>The Houston Independent School District (HISD) is proposing to build a high school at this location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site is bounded by Sampson Street on the west, Coyle Street on the south, Pease Street on the north and Scott Street on the east</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Southwest corner of Polk and Roberts Streets</td>
<td>Abandoned commercial site</td>
<td>Staff recommends commercial retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Northeast corner of Polk and Scott Streets</td>
<td>Site of abandoned warehouse, currently boarded up</td>
<td>Staff recommends adaptive reuse with commercial/retail uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Office/ Warehouse that has a “for sale” sign on site</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Parcels surrounded by Scott, Clay and Bell Streets</td>
<td>Abandoned commercial site</td>
<td>Staff recommends commercial retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Northeast corner of IH 45 and Cullen Boulevard</td>
<td>Currently vacant</td>
<td>Aspen Heights Partners proposes to build student housing on this site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Southwest corner of Cullen and Coyle Streets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Site is bounded by Cullen Boulevard on the west, Coyle Street on the north, IH 45 on the south and Hussion Street on the west</td>
<td>Abandoned commercial site that used to be a large furniture store</td>
<td>Staff recommends mixed use commercial/residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Northeast corner of Scott and Leeland Streets</td>
<td>Abandoned commercial site</td>
<td>Staff recommends townhomes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Elgin/Third Ward Station
Station Overview

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE & DEVELOPMENT DRIVERS
- The majority of residences in the station area are renter occupied (75 percent).
- Approximately 40 percent of the households in the station area are one-person households.
- The CMA gained both population and households during the period 2010 to 2013.

SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING
- Single family housing near the Elgin Station is made up primarily of older, single family detached homes, many of which tend to be less than 1,500 square feet and 60 to 70 years old.
- With considerably higher demand in nearby Midtown and EaDo, the Third Ward represents one of few remaining places close to Downtown, where developers can purchase land (either vacant lots or lots which can be redeveloped) and build new single family housing which can be marketed to a new generation and a wider range of incomes.

MULTI-FAMILY AND STUDENT HOUSING
- The CMA has a total of 1,974 multi-family units in 32 different complexes.
- New multi-family projects planned for the CMA include four complexes with 541 total units.
- Three lots near the Elgin Station are currently reported as under contract by student housing developers.
- As the student population continues to grow, there will continue to be demand for student housing near the University of Houston Main Campus and at light rail accessible locations.

RETAIL
- Retail development and redevelopment will only occur once new townhome development to the north and west begins to develop in all areas of the Greater Third Ward—including the 0.5-mile station area.
- Larger retail development will also take time to occur as the large anchors needed for these projects demand significantly higher demographic indicators before making an investment.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES
- Refer to Table ES-2

INFRASTRUCTURE
- Adding signed bike lanes to Elgin and connecting with bike lanes along Cullen Boulevard will provide direct bike connectivity from the station.
- Gaps within the sidewalk network should be addressed by filling in missing links within the study area.
- Enclose drainage in areas where needed.
- Bike parking and bike storage could be incorporated into designs for new developments.
### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- Revise and update METRO’s existing TOD Goals and Strategies to include action driven new strategies for METRO Board approval to authorize staff to better pursue TOD opportunities.
- Work with the City of Houston to evaluate and coordinate parking requirement updates in Chapter 26 with the City of Houston to encourage greater use of land and TOD development opportunities (ex: create parking benefit districts around rail stations).
- Coordinate with the City of Houston and developers to evaluate and strengthen Chapter 42 of the City’s Land Development Ordinances to further encourage development that encourages transit supportive corridors.
- Work with H-GAC to align project evaluation and funding levels for the TIP to support TOD projects
- Further coordinate with the City of Houston’s Economic Development Department to develop framework for a TOD Pilot project.
- Support prioritization of capital projects that would improve multimodal access to key transit nodes (ex: grants or City of Houston ReBuild Houston funding).
- Long-term actions are the actual joint development activities: finding partners, lease agreements, development designs, and construction. Work with stakeholders (such as HUD, City of Houston Housing Authority, the Hospital District, and CDCs) in the development of transit supportive, mixed-use development that include affordable housing opportunities.

### NEXT STEPS
Figure ES-3: Development Opportunity Sites
Table ES-3: Development Opportunity Sites Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>CURRENT USE</th>
<th>PROPOSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>East and adjacent to the station platform</td>
<td>Strip Center; former bookstore Dominos Pizza Asian restaurant</td>
<td>Multi-Family Campus Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>West and northwest of station between Elgin, Scott, Canfield and Drew Streets</td>
<td>Single family and vacant One listed commercial parcel</td>
<td>Multi-Family Campus Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Bounded by Lucinda, Milby and Rosalie Streets</td>
<td>Single family residential</td>
<td>Multi-Family Campus Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Southwest of station on Scott Street between Simmons and Reeves Streets</td>
<td>Residential and vacant uses</td>
<td>Retail Commercial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Southwest of station on Scott Street between Reeves and Holman Streets</td>
<td>Commercial and public/institutional Vacant and multi-family residential</td>
<td>Mixed Used LAI Design Group Provisional Plan – University (Incomplete)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Macgregor Park/MLK Station

## Station Overview

### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- **DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE & AND DEVELOPMENT DRIVERS**
  - The station area and CMA exhibit positive population, employment, and income growth during the period 2000 to 2014.
  - Approximately 62 percent of housing within the station area is owner-occupied.
  - The number of households within the station area is increasing while the size of households is declining.
  - The University of Houston dominates the land use in the northernmost portion of the CMA as well as portions of the half-mile radius from the MacGregor/MLK rail station.

- **DEVELOPMENT TRENDS & POTENTIAL**
  - **SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING**
    - Middle income homebuyers are seeking affordable options for homes near the Texas Medical Center light rail transit.
    - Additional townhome development is anticipated within the next three to five years amounting to roughly 60 to 90 units with sale prices in the upper $200,000s.
    - Opportunities to redevelop existing residential property would be unlikely as deed restrictions are in place for most of the station area.
  - **MULTI-FAMILY AND STUDENT HOUSING**
    - There are currently 2,523 managed multi-family units in 29 different complexes. Most of the multi-family units in the CMA are in market rate complexes, but four are operated as student housing—totaling 886 units.
    - Multi-family plans for the CMA include three projects with 488 total units, all class A.
    - Two of the complexes are being planned as student housing and will total 266 units when completed.
    - As the student population continues to grow there will continue to be demand for student housing near the University of Houston Main Campus and at light rail accessible locations.
  - **RETAIL**
    - Owners and managers of the Page Center adjacent to the rail station indicate they do not expect larger scale retail development is not expected for around 10 years.

### DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Refer to Table ES-2
## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### INFRASTRUCTURE

- Enhance sidewalk connectivity by widening and enhancing sidewalk infrastructure within opportunity sites to the southeast of the intersection with MLK Boulevard.
- Coordinate with University of Houston on development of tract to the northeast of the rail station to ensure a walkable grid is incorporated into the site and creates access to the station.
- If warranted by demand and determined to be feasible by an engineering and safety review, an addition of a pedestrian entrance/exit to the north of the rail station is recommended.

### NEXT STEPS

- Revise and update METRO’s existing TOD Goals and Strategies to include action driven new strategies for METRO Board approval to authorize staff to better pursue TOD opportunities.
- Work with the City of Houston to evaluate and coordinate parking requirement updates in Chapter 26 with the City of Houston to encourage greater use of land and TOD development opportunities (ex: create parking benefit districts around rail stations).
- Coordinate with the City of Houston and developers to evaluate and strengthen Chapter 42 of the City’s Land Development Ordinances to further encourage development that encourages transit supportive corridors.
- Work with H-GAC to align project evaluation and funding levels for the TIP to support TOD projects.
- Further coordinate with the City of Houston’s Economic Development Department to develop framework for a TOD Pilot project.
- Support prioritization of capital projects that would improve multimodal access to key transit nodes (ex: grants or City of Houston ReBuild Houston funding).
- Long-term actions are the actual joint development activities: finding partners, lease agreements, development designs, and construction. Work with stakeholders (such as HUD, City of Houston Housing Authority, the Hospital District, and CDCs) in the development of transit supportive, mixed-use development that include affordable housing opportunities.
Figure ES-4: Development Opportunity Sites
Table ES-4: Development Opportunity Sites Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>CURRENT USE</th>
<th>PROPOSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Northeast corner of Martin Luther King (MLK) Boulevard and Old Spanish Trail (OST); smaller parcel to the north of Brays Bayou between Spur 5 and MLK</td>
<td>Bought by the University of Houston from MacGregor Estate during the development of Purple Line 43 acres plus additional 1 acre site to the north of Brays Bayou</td>
<td>Potential UH student housing, other UH buildings, and retail The number of units is not defined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Southwest corner of OST and Spur 5</td>
<td>Undeveloped and abandoned for sale</td>
<td>Potential retail or mixed-use depending on development of above site by UH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Southeast corner of MLK Boulevard and OST frontage along OST (5100 OST)</td>
<td>Undeveloped, formerly Ford’s Auto Sales for sale by New Quest Properties 6 acre site</td>
<td>Potential retail or mixed-use depending on development of above site by UH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Southeast corner of MLK Boulevard and OST (4901 to 4999 OST)</td>
<td>Red Rooster bar and lounge</td>
<td>Potential retail or mixed-use depending on development of above site by UH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Southwest corner of MLK Boulevard and OST (4802 to 4822 MLK)</td>
<td>Insurance, nail salon, Nick’s Grocery and other small retail</td>
<td>Potential retail or mixed-use depending on development of above site by UH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Palm Center Transit Center Station

### Station Overview

### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE &amp; AND DEVELOPMENT DRIVERS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- During the time period from 2000 to 2010, population in the 0.5-mile radius had increased in by 6.3 percent and households by 16 percent; with positive growth trends projected for the next decade.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The median household income in the study area is approximately $32,000; 23 percent of population earns less than $15,000 annually.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The majority of the residences in the station area are renter occupied (67 percent).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEVELOPMENT TRENDS &amp; POTENTIAL</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- New townhome development of one to two new projects (depending on the availability and size of land tracts) would be supportable in the next three to five years.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Pricing for the supportable 60 to 90 new units will be in the upper $200,000s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The new Villages at Palm Center will add 222 new mixed income apartments to the station area by 2015.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- At least one new additional apartment development may be supportable in the next three to five years in the station area or close environs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RETAIL</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- There are still numerous vacant land parcels and empty retail buildings to continue retail/service expansion for the next three to five years.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The Palm Center Station area should expect from one to two net new business openings per year up to year three.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- By year three up to year five retail and service establishments should increase by two to four per year. These businesses will likely be neighborhood-oriented, serving primarily the immediately surrounding moderate-income population.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES</th>
<th>Refer to Table ES-2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFRASTRUCTURE</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- As the redevelopment of the Palm Center site proceeds, the study recommends a mini grid overlaid on the site by extending Cavanaugh Street across the existing Palm Center site to connect with Griggs Road.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Add on-street parking where feasible and/or structured parking wrapped by potential mixed-use development within the transit oriented district.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Parking should be shared by retail customers, residents, and transit users.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Bike parking facilities are recommended within the METRO Bike and Ride plan at the Palm Center Station.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- Revise and update METRO’s existing TOD Goals and Strategies to include action driven new strategies for METRO Board approval to authorize staff to better pursue TOD opportunities.
- Work with the City of Houston to evaluate and coordinate parking requirement updates in Chapter 26 with the City of Houston to encourage greater use of land and TOD development opportunities (ex: create parking benefit districts around rail stations).
- Coordinate with the City of Houston and developers to evaluate and strengthen Chapter 42 of the City’s Land Development Ordinances to further encourage development that encourages transit supportive corridors.
- Work with H-GAC to align project evaluation and funding levels for the TIP to support TOD projects.
- Further coordinate with the City of Houston’s Economic Development Department to develop framework for a TOD Pilot project.
- Support prioritization of capital projects that would improve multimodal access to key transit nodes (ex: grants or City of Houston ReBuild Houston funding).
- Long-term actions are the actual joint development activities: finding partners, lease agreements, development designs, and construction. Work with stakeholders (such as HUD, City of Houston Housing Authority, the Hospital District, and CDCs) in the development of transit supportive, mixed-use development that include affordable housing opportunities.

## NEXT STEPS

- Work with the City of Houston to evaluate and coordinate parking requirement updates in Chapter 26 with the City of Houston to encourage greater use of land and TOD development opportunities (ex: create parking benefit districts around rail stations).
- Coordinate with the City of Houston and developers to evaluate and strengthen Chapter 42 of the City’s Land Development Ordinances to further encourage development that encourages transit supportive corridors.
- Work with H-GAC to align project evaluation and funding levels for the TIP to support TOD projects.
- Further coordinate with the City of Houston’s Economic Development Department to develop framework for a TOD Pilot project.
- Support prioritization of capital projects that would improve multimodal access to key transit nodes (ex: grants or City of Houston ReBuild Houston funding).
- Long-term actions are the actual joint development activities: finding partners, lease agreements, development designs, and construction. Work with stakeholders (such as HUD, City of Houston Housing Authority, the Hospital District, and CDCs) in the development of transit supportive, mixed-use development that include affordable housing opportunities.
Figure ES-5: Development Opportunity Sites
## Table ES-5: Development Opportunity Sites Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>CURRENT USE</th>
<th>PROPOSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.   | The Palm Center Site | Assorted government offices  
- Public Library  
- County's Health System Offices  
- METRO’s rail corridor stakeholder office | Under consideration and further study  
- Recommend a mini grid while redeveloping the Palm Center site, to mitigate some of the access issues in the station area  
- Potential opportunity to connect Cavanaugh across to Griggs Road to provide access to residential neighborhoods south of Palm Center and through the proposed ITEX development |
| 2.   | YMCA  
- Southwest Corner of MLK Boulevard and Griggs Road | Houston Texas YMCA  
- Major and popular neighborhood amenity | N/A |
| 3.   | North of Griggs Road  
- Frontage on Griggs Road  
- Individual lots that have narrow frontage and are deep | Blighted commercial properties  
- Assorted Commercial currently – most buildings are in disrepair and are ground floor only  
- Limited access to Palm Center and parcels north of Griggs Road. Would impede successful development of the site into retail, commercial | Site may be well suited for townhome development  
Commercial uses are difficult because of access issues on Griggs Road |
| 4.   | East of MLK Boulevard  
- Adjacent to Oasis Park  
- 2.93 acres | Vacant  
- Purchased by Midtown Redevelopment Authority | Future Townhome development  
Could support approximately 50 to 70 townhomes |
| 5.   | Northwest corner of MLK Boulevard and Griggs Road | Vacant commercial | Proposed site for City of Houston public library |
| 6.   | Southeast corner MLK Boulevard and Griggs Road | Formerly Kings Best Flea Market | The Village of Palm Center is a 9+ acre development planned by the ITEX Group  
This project will be a mixed income development consisting of 154 apartments and 68 townhomes for a total of 222 new units  
A new street will be constructed separating the apartments from the townhomes and a 260 space 3 story parking garage will be included  
Will include 14,000 sq. ft. of retail/service space at street level |
STATION AREA IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Southeast Line has expanded into nearby residential communities, where transit customers seeking access to the rail line may originate from areas beyond a comfortable walking threshold or from areas where there is no accessible bus service. Therefore, conflicts between neighborhood residents and transit users competing for on-street parking may arise. Providing or sharing parking in targeted areas near the stations would be helpful. Other improvements include enhanced lighting and sidewalk improvements which are generally necessary a minimum of one block away from the stations.

The greatest areas of need for station area improvements fall within one of the following categories:

1. Completing and improving physical infrastructure
   - Addressing gaps within the sidewalk and bikeway network infrastructure to ensure pedestrian and bike access to the station platforms and within the station areas.
   - Reducing block sizes for new or redeveloping sites to enhance walking access.
   - Adding bike racks, bike sharing facilities and storage facilities near the station would promote bicycling.

2. Managing parking demand and supply within station areas
   - Creating opportunities for shared parking for residents, retail customers, and transit users in either structured or on-street parking facilities.
   - The use of a parking benefit district could be applied to the target district area to help manage parking demand while generating an income source for additional sidewalk, bike facility, and lighting improvements².

3. Creating a safe and viable pedestrian environment
   - Creating a safe and viable pedestrian environment by enhancing station area lighting, seating, landscape and other amenities.
   - Signalized, signed and painted pedestrian walkways and crossings around the stations would provide safer pedestrian access.
   - The increased presence of law enforcement along with lighting can convey a sense of safety.
   - Both sidewalk accessibility and all ramps within the immediate vicinity of the stations should meet all the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Finally, detailed traffic studies must be conducted before modifying the street network to include bike lanes and on-street parking. Specific improvements for each station are recommended in the body of the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TOD STRATEGIES AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Perhaps the most critical first step in TOD planning is identifying a diverse set of stakeholders that need to be involved. An effective TOD plan will depend on the active involvement and input of an array of public agencies, private-sector developers and financial firms, non-profits, and community organizations.

METRO Joint Development Strategies

METRO has several roles it can play in the TOD process. First and foremost, the transit agency’s primary responsibility is to provide high quality transit service and ensure safe operations of and access to its transit facilities. While TOD principles generally enhance station access and safety, as the land owner of the transit facilities, it is recommended that METRO closely evaluates any potential development that enhances its facilities. METRO is also a development partner through its joint development capabilities. Joint development was successfully utilized in the development of the Cypress Park & Ride. METRO is also capable of providing planning support with local governments to develop station areas by sharing information about its facilities.

Stakeholder Roles and Responsibilities

Local governments, such as the City of Houston, Harris County, and municipal management districts facilitate the community process with neighborhood stakeholders during the planning and development process. Local governments also possess multiple tools that are important to encouraging TOD such as urban design guidelines, land assemblage, building infrastructure, parking guidelines and management, and utilizing tax increment reinvestment zones (TIRZ) and municipal management districts. Lastly, local governments are responsible for the establishment of policy, regulations, and enforcement related to affordable housing issues.

Developers, including non-profit organizations such as neighborhood development corporations, are responsible for working with local governments to draft and finalize site plans, obtain necessary approvals, secure financing, complete land assembly, and manage construction of the project.

Funding partners are also important stakeholders as traditional financial institutions typically provide financing that can be used toward infrastructure construction, development of plans, and more. Funding partners can also include MPO, state, and federal agencies. Non-profit organizations are also a valuable funding resource and include organizations that provide loans, grants, equity investments, policy support, and technical and management assistance.

Public Policy Recommendations

The challenges discussed briefly below should be addressed through multi-agency coordination in order to most effectively support the implementation of TOD projects.

- METRO’s Transit Oriented Development Goals and Strategies document could identify specific action-oriented strategies to more clearly direct staff activities. By clarifying METRO’s position and priorities, developers and partners such as management districts and community stakeholders could better understand the opportunities and the role METRO can play in TOD projects.

- METRO will need to develop access management plans for rail stations, park & rides, and transit centers which integrate transit facility entrance/egress areas into the adjacent sidewalk and bike lane network. Currently, transit facilities have entrance/egress areas which may force pedestrians to walk in the opposite direction from activity centers and sites for potential TOD.

- METRO should also craft an internal policy describing which stations should have park & ride access and leverage the results of such an analysis to coordinate with the city and developers on shared parking opportunities and parking benefit districts. Revenue generated within the parking benefit districts could be leveraged to fund additional infrastructure improvements in the surrounding station area.
The City of Houston’s Chapter 42 could better address the unique elements and regulatory needs of TOD. Elements that can positively impact TOD are included in the Subdivision Ordinance; however, the ordinance does not recognize TOD as its own development typology that has a variety of more specialized regulatory needs and options that are not currently or most adequately covered in the existing ordinance. Some cities have recognized this and set up a specific review process for projects that meet certain TOD standards allowing better coordination and expedited reviews as an incentive to developers.

The Transit Corridor Ordinance has a positive influence on the ability to implement TOD projects, but the current level of incentives and the opt-in nature of the program have resulted in relatively few developments utilizing the regulatory structure set forth in the Ordinance. Additional incentives, such as an expedited review process, could provide additional encouragement that is currently lacking for developers.

Parking requirements can be a significant impediment to TOD projects due to the high costs to the developer and the impact that parking requirements can have on site layouts and access requirements. Section 26 of the Code of Ordinances provides some options for reduced parking requirements, but these options require several additional steps before being implemented. Often they require a more regional approach that extends beyond the scope of a particular project. Additional accommodation in Section 26 that specifically addresses projects that meet a TOD standard would further allow developers to make the best use of available development space without the cost and constraints of the existing parking requirements. This will also address a future demand on adjacent parking availability as more people can utilize transit for their trips.

Building codes are currently set to conform to the most restrictive code for the entire structure. This has negative impacts when attempting to build a mix of uses within a single development thus resulting in higher build out costs. For example a residential portion of a TOD would be subject to the more rigorous code requirement if there were a restaurant included in the project. Flexibility within the building code would make mixed use projects more feasible for developers. Form based codes are widely utilized in multiple cities with successful TOD. In the Dallas-Fort Worth region, twelve municipalities have enacted form-based codes to facilitate TOD projects. The City of Dallas has developed Form Districts that focus on building form and development standards that facilitate mixed use development by identifying separate requirements for the various uses that can be combined in one building.

Next Steps

The recommendations and strategies identified provide an opportunity for METRO to move beyond the information and analyses developed during the TOD study into actions that can help progress development opportunities in the station areas. METRO will play an active role in influencing transit supportive development by working directly with local jurisdictions, developers, property managers and other stakeholders who can benefit from TOD design and development.

Short and long term recommendations and strategies have been identified; however, there are a series of activities that were introduced in the Study Phase of the TOD Project that must be undertaken in the immediate future. These next steps should be utilized to sustain the momentum gained from the study and keep the TOD partners engaged. The immediate next steps are:

1. Continue engagement with the Special Districts using the TOD Marketing Brochure and the framework reports - The deliverables of the study include a framework report as well as a marketing brochure. Both may be used to elicit development interest within the station areas, and to educate the community and other stakeholders on TOD potential in the station area. This would also give METRO the opportunity to continue the dialogue that was initiated with management districts and stakeholders as a part of the study.

Chapter 51A, Article XIII, Form Districts, Dallas City Code, City of Dallas, 2008.
2. Coordinate with the City of Houston (Planning, Public Works & Engineering and Economic Development Department), participating agencies and partners to set up a TOD Task Force. During the course of the study, METRO had coordinated with the City of Houston’s Planning Department and PWE (Public Works and Engineering) to discuss the potential role of multi-agency TOD working group. A group such as this would be instrumental in identifying policy and institutional barriers to TOD implementation and in exploring appropriate solutions.

3. Develop a TOD Pilot Project in coordination with the City of Houston’s Economic Development Department - METRO and the City of Houston would coordinate in identifying METRORail stations as a pilot location and developing a framework to implement a pilot study.

4. Coordinate with HISD and the universities to identify TOD opportunities – As part of METRO’s stakeholder engagement during the TOD study, the project will continue dialogue with HISD and the University of Houston to coordinate efforts with their respective master planning efforts.

5. Continue coordinating with the Housing Authority, LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation), the City of Houston’s Housing department and other stakeholders to identify barriers and potential solutions for more workforce housing close to transit.

Finally, long-term analysis of transit oriented development should entail continual monitoring characteristics such as population, employment, housing tenure, racial and ethnic composition, median household income, housing costs, in-migration, journey-to-work and auto-ownership, among others. Working together with the tools identified in this document, METRO and other TOD stakeholders can make a lasting impact in the community, creating more sustainable communities with walkability, economic development, transit usage, and healthier neighborhoods.
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Overview

METRO initiated the TOD study in the Southeast Corridor (Purple Line) in an effort to encourage new development opportunities around the new stations, specifically the Leeland/Third Ward, Elgin/Third MacGregor Park/MLK and Palm Center Transit Center station areas. Land speculation and some property development have occurred in the corridor since the project development phase of the Southeast Corridor LRT line. This study attempts to capture market realities and the potential for TOD around the stations.

TOD is characterized by compact, walkable, mixed-use development at or near transit facilities, either bus or rail. TOD contributes to the increased use of transit and reduces automobile congestion. The combination of these changes creates a more cohesive neighborhood and a sense of place. In addition, TOD leverages transit infrastructure investment to promote economic development and sustainable growth, thus creating value for both the public and private sectors. METRO’s Board of Directors adopted Transit Oriented Development Strategies in September 2012. Additionally, the City of Houston, Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC), Harrisburg TIRZ #23 and the Greater Southeast Management District (GSEMD) all share similar goals and have certain tools and mechanisms, which are further examined.

1.2 Objectives

METRO’s commitment to undertake this effort was a condition of the Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), executed on November 28, 2011 for the construction of the North and Southeast Light Rail Transit lines. The primary objective of this study is to determine opportunities for TOD around Purple Line stations that will benefit from the region’s investments in transit as evidenced by increased patronage. The TOD framework will demonstrate market potential of each METRORail station in the current economic climate in Houston. The key items developed through this study include:

- A visioning and marketing tool provided to public and private developers that can stimulate ideas for quality urban infill development. This tool will also make the case for the economic viability for several development product types at specific METRORail stations;
- A market assessment and existing conditions analysis at each station; and
- Recommendations for leveraging existing policy or tools or new actions that METRO, the City of Houston, H-GAC, respective special districts and others could consider toward improving development opportunities.

1.3 Approach

Several key approaches determined the direction for the overall project. This included identifying priority locations for the Study; conducting stakeholder interviews with both community stakeholders and the private development community and working in partnership with both the City of Houston and the Houston Galveston Area Council.

1.3.1 Prioritizing Locations

METRO has a total of 39 rail stations on the existing Red, North, Southeast and East End lines. In order to best use the resources available for TOD Study, it was important to prioritize and identify those METRORail stations and park & ride lots that are the most suited for future growth, making them viable locations for further evaluation.

For purposes of identifying the METRORail stations to be studied, it was first necessary to understand the various types of station typologies in the corridors to be studied, and the types of land use characteristics that would indicate an opportunity for increased and economically viable development in the immediate station area. For this purpose, the identification of stations was accomplished in three steps. In the first step, each station was categorized into one of the following five typologies, distinguishing it in terms of its function in an urban setting.
1. **Central Business District (CBD)** - Medium to high density/ employment focused

2. **Urban Center** - Low to medium density/ serves a mix of land uses

3. **Urban Neighborhood** - Low to medium density/ primarily serves residential uses.

4. **Campus/ Special Event** - Predominantly characterized by a single use.

5. **Intermodal** - Connectivity to other modes

In the second step, each of the stations was evaluated to determine the presence of key characteristics that would indicate opportunity to improve the development in the immediate station area. And finally, the third step was to prioritize the stations within each typology, based on their opportunity characteristics, to determine which locations were most suitable for this study.

The four stations selected on the Southeast Line represented three of the five typologies and included Intermodal, Urban Center and Urban Neighborhood stations. The selected stations are the Leeland/ Third Ward, Elgin/ Third Ward, MLK/ MacGregor stations and the Palm Center Transit Center Station.

### 1.3.2 Methodology and Key Milestones

The TOD study is comprised of four key milestones. The first step was to document the existing conditions which included examining current land use, population, employment, auto and pedestrian infrastructure and looking at other factors that influence development around the station.

The market assessments report is another key milestone in the study. Market assessments at each station help provide an economic outlook for various development types in the station area. The market assessments defined the CMA as the boundary that contains the majority of existing residential and commercial facilities influencing the future development of the area within a 0.5-mile radius of the Southeast stations. For purposes of the analysis, primary and secondary data sources were used to measure current and projected population, household and demographic data relating to the 0.5-mile radius of the station, the CMA and to comparisons with Harris County and the overall Houston Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

As part of the market assessments for each station, METRO conducted interviews with local developers, who provided insights into their market knowledge of the station area. The developers also shared their own history of developing or investing in the area, and discussed perceived and real barriers and opportunities to developing around the stations and in the corridor.

The next step was to use the existing conditions and market assessment data to identify development opportunities around the stations. Finally, in collaboration with the project partners and after considering project data and interviews, potential TOD scenarios were developed for each station. Note that these are only one of many potential development scenarios at each of the stations.

For each of the corridors under study, meetings were held with neighborhood stakeholders and community representatives to understand their vision for the community.

### 1.3.3 Partners

METRO recognizes that in order to build upon previous efforts and fully understand development changes in the city as well as the light rail corridors, the City of Houston and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) H-GAC would need to provide technical assistance and guidance to the study. Therefore, the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was created to review and evaluate technical work and provide study oversight to ensure that the goals and objectives of the study were being met. Additionally, METRO in collaboration with H-GAC and the City of Houston held stakeholder meetings to gain insight into the Southeast Corridor community during the study process. The meetings also provided guidance to METRO’s planning efforts for TOD in the Southeast corridor and stations. The stakeholders were individuals from communities who have insight into their respective communities and were able to offer their unique perspectives. Generally, the stakeholders welcomed the idea of TOD and wanted to see commercial/mixed use developments but also wanted maintained the character of the neighborhoods.
1.3.4 Existing Studies
Previous studies produced by METRO, the City of Houston and H-GAC provided value to this effort from the onset. Each of the project partners has a role in how transportation infrastructure serves the public and affects land uses. The three key studies that helped shape this effort included the “Before and After Study” for the Southeast Line (March 2014); and the City of Houston’s Urban Corridor Planning Initiative (June 2006) (later Transit Corridor Ordinance); and more recently, the Urban Framework (May 2013). Leveraging existing relationships, METRO and the City of Houston also coordinated a discussion with the Housing and Community Development Department, The Houston Housing Authority, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and various departments within the City of Houston including Planning, Public Works and Engineering and Economic Development divisions.

1.3.5 METRO’s New Bus Network
In 2013 METRO kicked-off the Transit System Reimagining initiative. System Reimagining took a fresh look at the METRO service area (given existing transit facilities and level of financial resources) and designed a regional transit system from the ground up with a “blank-slate” approach. The result of System Reimagining is METRO’s New Bus Network (NBN). The NBN is a five year program to completely revamp the bus system and facilities. METRO is moving from a hub and spoke system routing connections through downtown to a grid system redesigned with proposed benefits such as:

- More frequent routes to more places
- Easier to understand and use
- Connecting more people to more jobs
- Providing much better weekend service
- Better serves METRO’s current riders
- Providing faster, more reliable trips
- Built to support future growth.

The first phase of METRO’s New Bus Network was implemented on August 16, 2015. It is important to note that this study was conducted prior to the implementation of the NBN; therefore NBN information was not available for this study.
2 SOUTHEAST OVERVIEW

2.1 Corridor
The Southeast Corridor includes a major portion of Downtown Houston, including its commercial core and a growing residential population in areas east of downtown. The Southeast Corridor also contains the Third Ward which is one of Houston’s older, predominantly African-American communities. This corridor also includes two institutions of higher learning, The University of Houston – Main Campus and Texas Southern University (TSU). It also includes the Palm Center, which currently consists of the U.S. post office, Neighborhood Centers, Inc. governmental offices, the Alice McKean Young Neighborhood library and the Houston Texans YMCA is at the southern terminus of the Purple Line. A good portion of the corridor encompasses a community that is vastly transit dependent, and has lower incomes.

2.2 METRORail Purple Line
The METRORail Purple Line is a 6.56-mile light rail line from downtown Houston to the Palm Center, near Martin Luther King Boulevard and Griggs Road as shown in Figure 2-1. The project will allow transfers to the existing METRORail Red Line at Main Street Square Station in Downtown as well as the Green line. Construction of the North Line began in July 2009, and the line opened for service on May 23, 2015.
Figure 2-1: Southeast Corridor LRT
3 LEELAND/THIRD WARD

The Leeland/Third Ward Station is located at the intersection of Leeland Street and Scott Street. Leeland, Scott, Polk, and Cullen serve as the major roads for traffic and commerce within the 0.5-mile radius. The CMA contains the station area and provides a context for the amount and type of development, which the station area could potentially capture as depicted in the Figure 3-1.

The Leeland/Third Ward Station falls within four special districts, the GSEMD, the East Downtown Management District (EaDo), the Greater East End Management District (GEEMD), and the Harrisburg Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) #23. The management districts are shown in Figure 3-2. The TIRZ boundaries are shown in Figure 3-3.
Figure 3-1: Study Area and CMA
Figure 3-2: Management Districts
Figure 3-3: Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones

TIRZs
- Stations
- Southeast Line
- East End Line
- Railroad
- East Downtown
- Harrisburg
- O.S.T./Almeda

Source: Harris County Appraisal District, 2014
3.1 Demographics

Key drivers of the development change in the Leeland/Third Ward station area are changing demographics, increasing EBI (Effective Buying Income), spillover demand from activity centers such as Downtown and EaDo and increasing enrollments at the University of Houston and Texas Southern University.

Demographic and socio-economic trends within the 0.5-mile radius and the CMA around the Leeland/Third Ward station show an area in gradual transition. The 0.5-mile radius and the CMA lost 10.3 percent and 5.2 percent of their population, while showing an increase in households by 12.3 percent and 16 percent respectively. This can be explained by the fact that there is trend towards smaller household sizes. Approximately 66 percent of the households in the station area are one to two person households. (Table 3-1)

Another indicator that will drive the demand for new residential and retail development is the median household income and the EBI within the area. EBI in the station area and the CMA, while currently less than that of the Houston MSA and Harris County, is expected to rise. Additionally, the area has a high daytime population due to the presence of the universities, driving the demand for retail land uses.

Finally, neighborhoods undergoing transformation such as EaDo (East Downtown), with a reasonable volume of single-family detached housing projects lie in proximity to the Leeland/Third Ward station creating spillover demand in the station area and the CMA.
### Table 3-1 Historic Growth and Projections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000 Census</th>
<th>2010 Census</th>
<th>2013 Estimate</th>
<th>2018 Projection</th>
<th>GROWTH 00-10</th>
<th>GROWTH 10-13</th>
<th>GROWTH 13-18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>POPULATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5-Mile Radius</td>
<td>3,193</td>
<td>2,863</td>
<td>2,920</td>
<td>3,042</td>
<td>-10.3%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMA</td>
<td>17,024</td>
<td>16,141</td>
<td>16,523</td>
<td>17,223</td>
<td>-5.2%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris County</td>
<td>3,400,577</td>
<td>4,092,459</td>
<td>4,285,034</td>
<td>4,626,152</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston MSA</td>
<td>4,693,140</td>
<td>5,920,416</td>
<td>6,223,959</td>
<td>6,747,614</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                |             |             |               |                |              |              |              |
| **HOUSEHOLDS** |             |             |               |                |              |              |              |
| 0.5-Mile Radius| 1,033       | 1,160       | 1,193         | 1,247          | 12.3%        | 2.9%         | 4.6%         |
| CMA            | 5,518       | 6,403       | 6,622         | 6,976          | 16.0%        | 3.4%         | 5.4%         |
| Harris County  | 1,205,527   | 1,435,155   | 1,500,011     | 1,619,300      | 19.1%        | 4.5%         | 8.0%         |
| Houston MSA    | 1,648,146   | 2,062,529   | 2,166,191     | 2,348,586      | 25.1%        | 5.0%         | 8.4%         |

Source: Developmental Potential, METRO Leeland/Third Ward Station, CDS 2015, American Community Survey Census Data 2012; PCensus for Map Info, Copyright 2013 Tetrad Corporation
Figure 3-4: Owner and Renter Occupied Housing
3.2 Land Use

The Leeland/Third Ward Station is located at the intersection of Leeland Street and Scott Street. Most of the development around the Leeland / Third Ward Station dates back to the mid-1940s. Land use within the station area consists of large commercial and industrial lots, with some scattered retail, single-family detached and undeveloped tracts (Figure 3-5). Many of the industrial and commercial uses being located on large tracts are making them attractive for redevelopment, without having to assemble land, as might be case within the Elgin station area.

There is one school, and seven places of worship clustered in the 0.5-mile radius of Leeland/Third Ward Station (Figure 3-6 and Table 3-2). This might potentially be a barrier for certain types of commercial development in the area, specifically businesses that depend on alcohol sales as the primary source of income.

![Image of Leeland/Third Ward Station](image)

According to the Leeland station “Development Potential” report, Houston Independent School District (HISD) plans to build a new high school campus between Pease, Coyle, Sampson, and Scott Streets generating new vehicle and pedestrian activity. In addition, the high school will bring infrastructure and streetscape improvements to the 0.5-mile radius area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dodson Elementary-Montessori</td>
<td>Elementary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Church New Zion Memorial</td>
<td>Christian – Methodist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>St. Emanuel Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>St. Mathew’s Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mt. Olive Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mt. Rose Missionary Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Greater Zion Missionary Baptist</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>St. Paul Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian - Baptist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3-2 Schools and Places of Worship

---

4 CDS Report, 2014
Figure 3-5: Land Use
Figure 3-6: Schools and Places of Worship
3.3 Connectivity

The Leeland/Third Ward Station is positioned within the median of Scott Street. The northbound and southbound platforms lie immediately north and south of the intersection of Scott and Leeland Streets, respectively. The pedestrian entry and exit area for each platform is located within the pedestrian crossing zone of the intersection with Leeland Street. There are no signalized mid-block crossings available to enable pedestrians to access the station from Bell or Pease Streets (See Figure 3-7). On-street parking is available along residential streets.

Sidewalk coverage is sporadic and discontinuous along the neighborhood streets to the east and west of the station. While Scott Street is bracketed by sidewalks that are five feet wide or wider, sidewalk widths narrow to approximately three feet closer to the station.
Figure 3-7: Street Network and Sidewalks
Table 3-3 shows the connectivity and accessibility of the station area by the various modes of transportation. The area around the station is moderately accessible with the exception of designated parking and drop-off space.

### Table 3-3: Connectivity and Accessibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCESS</th>
<th>GOOD</th>
<th>FAIR</th>
<th>POOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street Grid</td>
<td>▪ The street grid is made up of small blocks, but several large assemblages break the street pattern.</td>
<td>▪ IH 45 poses a barrier to the southwest of the station.</td>
<td>▪</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian (Block Sizes)</td>
<td>▪ IH 45 poses a barrier to the southwest of the station.</td>
<td>▪ Sidewalks are discontinuous and in poor condition in the neighborhood</td>
<td>▪</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles</td>
<td>▪ Traffic does not exceed LOS B*</td>
<td>▪</td>
<td>▪</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADA</td>
<td>▪ ADA ramps exist on majority of sidewalks</td>
<td>▪</td>
<td>▪</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycles</td>
<td>▪ Bikeways in the study area but no direct connection to the station</td>
<td>▪</td>
<td>▪</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjacent Parking</td>
<td>▪ No off-street parking available near the station</td>
<td>▪ On-street parking in the neighborhood for local residents.</td>
<td>▪</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiss &amp; Ride Drop Off</td>
<td>▪ No off-street space available</td>
<td>▪</td>
<td>▪</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: METRO Southeast Corridor Traffic Report for Final Design, 2009*
3.4 Bus Routes and Bikeways

Several local bus routes provide service to the community within the 0.5-mile radius shown in Figure 3-9. The Leeland/Third Ward station is directly served by routes on Scott Street. Bus service on Polk, Cullen, Sampson and York Streets also lies within the 0.5-mile station area (see Figure 3-8).

Shared on-street bike lanes are available along Sampson and York Streets and painted bike lanes area are present along Polk Street and Cullen Boulevard.
Figure 3-8: Bus Routes and Bikeways

Note: Due to the timing of the implementation of New Bus Network, the Bus Routes and Bikeways map does not reflect METRO’s current network.
3.5 Market Trends and Opportunities
The following section summarizes detailed market findings and opportunities regarding the development outlook in the Leeland/Third Ward Station area.

Developers that were interviewed indicated that spillover demand from neighboring activity centers is driving the demand for residential growth in the station area. Several single neighborhood family developments are within a few blocks of the Leeland/Third Ward Station. Growing demand for multi-family housing from the universities, displaced renters looking to stay in close proximity to downtown have spurred several new developments around the station.

3.5.1 Market Trends (CDS Market Research)

**Single-Family Housing**
Households employed in Downtown, typically with higher levels of disposable income are willing to locate closer to work, driving the residential demand in neighborhoods within the IH-610 Loop, particularly those in close proximity to Downtown. Several single-family neighborhood projects are currently being developed within a few blocks of the Leeland/Third Ward Station. Based on re-plat applications filed with the City of Houston, 258 new single family homes could potentially be constructed in the next one to two years. Most are located to the west of the station but one is located a couple blocks north, one is a couple blocks east, and one is a couple blocks southeast. Considering these planned projects and the residential sale trends described earlier, the market for single family detached and attached housing appears to be strong in the 0.5-mile radius surrounding the Leeland/Third Ward Station. Newly constructed single-family units are expected to sell from $225k to $300k depending on the size and amenities, with an average closer to $275k.

**Multi-Family and Student Housing**
The potential market for multi-family and student housing within the CMA is driven by the increasing enrolments at the University of Houston Main Campus and Texas Southern University. It is estimated that 4,488 new housing units will need to be constructed in the CMA by 2020 to meet the current trend of population growth and persons per housing unit. Of these, about 62 percent or 2,550 will be renter-occupied units (Source). This includes the demand for market rate units, affordable units, and student housing units. There are currently 576 units under construction or planned. This leaves 1,976 units needed to meet the projections by 2020. One of the projects planned for the CMA—the Aspen Height student housing development—will be located a few blocks southeast of the Leeland/Third Ward Station. This project is planned to have 180 one to four-bedroom units.

**Retail**
Typically, retail demand and development lags residential development. While the station area and the CMA have not seen major commercial and retail development within the last several decades, this trend is beginning to change. Residential development pressure from Downtown and EaDo is beginning to spill over into the Leeland/Third Ward Station area creating interest in commercial development as well. Members of the development community who participated in interviews with CDS believed that major retail redevelopment and investment in the Leeland/Third Ward Station area is likely within the next two to five years.

However, it is also likely that commercial developers will likely end up competing with residential developers when bidding on retail redevelopment sites near the Leeland/Third Ward Station.

3.5.2 Opportunity Sites
Based on the recommendations, TOD opportunities were identified around the Leeland/Third Ward station. Table 3-4 and Figure 3-9 provide an overview of these opportunities. The numbered rows on the table correspond to numbered sites on the map.

---

5 Developmental Potential, METRO Leeland/Third Ward Station, CDS 2015
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>CURRENT USE</th>
<th>PROPOSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Northwest corner of Coyle and Scott Streets</td>
<td>Area is currently being used for residential purposes. There is also vacant land throughout the location</td>
<td>The Houston Independent School District (HISD) is proposing to build a high school at this location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Southwest corner of Polk and Roberts Streets</td>
<td>Abandoned commercial site</td>
<td>Staff recommends commercial retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Northeast corner of Polk and Scott Streets</td>
<td>Site of abandoned warehouse, currently boarded up Office/Warehouse that has a “for sale” sign on site</td>
<td>Staff recommends adaptive reuse with commercial/retail uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Parcels surrounded by Scott, Clay and Bell Streets</td>
<td>Abandoned commercial site</td>
<td>Staff recommends commercial retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Northeast corner of IH 45 and Cullen Boulevard</td>
<td>Currently vacant</td>
<td>Aspen Heights Partners proposes to build student housing on this site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Southwest corner of Cullen and Coyle Streets</td>
<td>Abandoned commercial site that used to be a large furniture store</td>
<td>Staff recommends mixed use commercial/residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Northeast corner of Scott and Leeland Streets</td>
<td>Abandoned commercial site</td>
<td>Staff recommends townhomes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3-9: Opportunity Sites

Opportunity Sites
- Stations
- Southeast Line
- East End Line
- Railroad
- Opportunity Sites

Land Use
- Commercial - 39 acres
- Industrial - 113 acres
- Multi-Family Residential - 6 acres
- Office - 2 acres
- Parks and Open Space - 0 acres
- Public/Institutional - 16 acres
- Single Family - 71 acres
- Transportation/Utilities - 37 acres
- Undeveloped - 58 acres

Source: Harris County Appraisal District, 2012
3.5.3 Station Visualization

Based on the proposed development opportunities identified at each station, visualizations were prepared to show the type of scaled development and redevelopment that could be expected over time. The figures below show this development in stages ranging from near-term to long-term.

Leeland/Third Ward

1. Station activity spurs infill development in vacant buildings adjacent to the station as well as spillover development from neighboring EaDo.

2. Initial 3-4 story residential designed to fit with the character and scale of the neighborhood.

3. Further development adds more retail and takes advantage of the residential population. Denser development close to the station encourages a walkable, small-scale environment.
3.6 Station Area Improvements

The following section includes recommendations for improvements to sidewalk infrastructure, bike and pedestrian amenities and connectivity; as well as recommendations on parking management within the station areas.

Public realm improvements in the Leeland/Third Ward Station area such as these discussed below and shown in Figure 3-10 would provide better access to opportunity sites as shown in Figure 3-9.

- Extend signed shared bike lanes along Leeland Street east from downtown to connect with the Columbia Tap Trail, the Leeland/Third Ward rail station and the signed bike lanes along Cullen Boulevard.
- Improve or add sidewalks and lighting throughout the study area and particularly along streets adjacent to the planned high school (Scott, Pease, Coyle, and Sampson Streets).
- Coordinate with Houston Independent School District to ensure that new high school design maintains and enhances pedestrian connections to rail station and Columbia Tap Trail.
- Parking and school bus loading/unloading could be integrated into a higher density structure in a manner similar to the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and DeBakey High School under construction in downtown Houston and the Texas Medical Center, respectively.
- Coordinate with the City of Houston to extend Tharp Street to connect with Cullen Boulevard.
Figure 3-10: Accessibility Walkshed
4 ELGIN/THIRD WARD

The Elgin/Third Ward Station is located at the intersection of Elgin Street and Scott Street. All of the study area lies within the GSEMD boundaries (Figure 4-2). Portions of the study area lie within the Old Spanish Trail (OST)/Almeda TIRZ (TIRZ #7) (Figure 4-3). Elgin, Scott, Cullen and Holman Streets serve as the major arterials within a 0.5-mile radius of the station, with institutional and commercial land uses organized along these corridors. The CMA contains the station area and provides a context for the amount and type of development, which the station area could potentially capture as depicted in the Figure 4-1. The management districts are shown in Figure 4-2 and the TIRZs are shown in Figure 4-3.

The University of Houston (UH) main campus is located to the southeast of the Elgin Station. Notable UH facilities in the station area include structures and fields for baseball, softball, tennis, football, and track and field, as well as buildings for alumni, Reserve Officer Training Corp, and various academic departments. Also within the station area is the recently built TDECU Stadium which seats 40,000 and is designed for a future capacity of 60,000.

The Elgin Station 0.5-mile radius also includes buildings to the southwest that are associated with Jack Yates High School and Texas Southern University (TSU).
Figure 4-1: Study Area and CMA
Figure 4-2: Management Districts
Figure 4-3: Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones
4.1 Demographics

There is a significantly higher percentage of young, single adult population within the Elgin/Third Ward station area as well as the CMA. The station area and the CMA have approximately 40 percent and nearly 45 percent one-person households, considerably higher than both Houston MSA and Harris County.

By the 2010 Census, the 0.5-mile radius had lost approximately 21 percent in population and 18 percent in households, with estimates for 2013 and projections for 2018 showing this trend continuing. Unlike the 0.5-mile radius, the CMA gained both population and households during the period from 2010 to 2013. This data is reflected in (Table 4-1).

Approximately 54 percent of population earns less than $15,000 annually, an indicator that is likely exaggerated because of the predominance of young adults within the 0.5-mile radius and the CMA.

The majority of the residences in the station area are renter occupied (75 percent) as shown in Figure 4-4.
### Table 4-1: Historic Growth and Projections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>2000 CENSUS</th>
<th>2010 CENSUS</th>
<th>2013 ESTIMATE</th>
<th>2018 PROJECTION</th>
<th>GROWTH 00-10</th>
<th>GROWTH 10-13</th>
<th>GROWTH 13-18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.5-Mile Radius</td>
<td>3,580</td>
<td>2,832</td>
<td>2,710</td>
<td>2,632</td>
<td>-20.9%</td>
<td>-4.3%</td>
<td>-2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMA</td>
<td>18,279</td>
<td>18,792</td>
<td>18,944</td>
<td>19,200</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris County</td>
<td>3,400,577</td>
<td>4,092,459</td>
<td>4,285,034</td>
<td>4,626,152</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston MSA</td>
<td>4,693,140</td>
<td>5,920,416</td>
<td>6,223,959</td>
<td>6,747,614</td>
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<td>5.1%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOUSEHOLDS</th>
<th>2000 CENSUS</th>
<th>2010 CENSUS</th>
<th>2013 ESTIMATE</th>
<th>2018 PROJECTION</th>
<th>GROWTH 00-10</th>
<th>GROWTH 10-13</th>
<th>GROWTH 13-18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.5-Mile Radius</td>
<td>1,448</td>
<td>1,183</td>
<td>1,134</td>
<td>1,104</td>
<td>-18.3%</td>
<td>-4.2%</td>
<td>-2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMA</td>
<td>6,452</td>
<td>6,202</td>
<td>6,289</td>
<td>6,493</td>
<td>-3.9%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris County</td>
<td>1,205,527</td>
<td>1,435,155</td>
<td>1,500,011</td>
<td>1,619,300</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston MSA</td>
<td>1,648,146</td>
<td>2,062,529</td>
<td>2,166,191</td>
<td>2,348,586</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Developmental Potential, METRO Elgin/Third Ward Station, CDS 2015, American Community Survey Census Data 2012; PCensus for Map Info, Copyright 2013 Tetrad Corporation*
Figure 4-4: Owner and Renter Occupied Housing
4.2 **Land Use**

Like the Leeland station area, most of the development within the 0.5-mile radius area has existed since the mid-1940s, with the major exception being the UH and TSU properties. By the 1970s, the area was mostly developed with the largest changes being the redevelopment of existing properties.

Today the Elgin/Third Ward station area is characterized by the high school and university campuses to the south and east and the residential area of the Third Ward to the north and west. (See Figure 4-5). The residential structures are mainly single family detached homes, many of which show the signs of their advanced age. While new private townhome development is occurring to the east and north (closer to Downtown) the station area has yet to see any new major, market rate development.

The local development community has observed that “locating multiple lots which can be combined for larger developments can be done easier here than in other locations within the same distance from Downtown.” Despite this, the barrier to redevelopment here is that much of the Third Ward is still aesthetically less attractive; with a high number of rented single-family houses.

According to the Harris County Appraisal District, there are two schools and 23 places of worship within the 0.5-mile radius of Elgin/Third Ward Station listed in Table 4-2. The location and types of the institutional activities and in the 0.5-mile radius are shown in Figure 4-6 and will limit the types of new commercial development potential.

---

6 Developmental Potential, METRO Elgin/Third Ward Station, CDS 2015
### Table 4-2: Schools and Places of Worship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yates High School</td>
<td>High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>University of Houston Charter School</td>
<td>Elementary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Church New Zion Memorial</td>
<td>Christian – Methodist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pine Grove Missionary Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>New Birth Missionary Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pentecost Tabernacle</td>
<td>Christian – Pentecostal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>New Providence Missionary Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Holman Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Second Pleasant Grove Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>St. Matthew’s Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>True Faith Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Christian Home Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Mt. Olive Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>New Birth Missionary Baptist Church</td>
<td>Christian – Baptist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 16     | Boynton United Methodist Church | Christian – Methodist |}

- **NUMBER**: The unique identifier for each entry.
- **NAME**: The name of the school or place of worship.
- **NOTES**: The type of school or the denomination it represents.
Figure 4-6: Institutional Activities
4.3 Connectivity

The Elgin/Third Ward Station is positioned within the median of Scott Street. The northbound and southbound platforms are placed immediately north of the intersection of Scott and Elgin Streets, respectively. The pedestrian entry and exit area for each platform is located within the pedestrian crossing zone of the intersection with Elgin Street (See Figure 4-7). On-street parking is available along residential streets.

Like the Leeland/Third Ward station, sidewalk coverage is sporadic and discontinuous along the neighborhood streets. However, a sidewalk network serves the major streets adjacent to the schools and universities.

While sidewalks widths are approximately 5 feet within the station area, they are closer to the rail station platform.
Figure 4-7: Street Network and Sidewalks
## Table 4-3: Connectivity and Accessibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCESS</th>
<th>GOOD</th>
<th>FAIR</th>
<th>POOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street Grid</td>
<td>- Street grid present with a variety of block sizes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian (Block Sizes)</td>
<td>- Mix of small (250’x250’) and larger (250’x &gt;500’) block sizes</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Sidewalks exist along major thoroughfares, but are discontinuous or in disrepair on local streets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles</td>
<td>- Acceptable levels of service (D or better)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- ADA ramps exist where sidewalks are present, but overall coverage is poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycles</td>
<td>- Several bicycle facilities in study area, but none connect directly to the station</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjacent Parking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- No parking provided for the station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Only public on-street parking available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiss &amp; Ride Drop Off</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- No drop off area provided for the station</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: METRO Southeast Corridor Traffic Report for Final Design, 2009*
4.4 Bus Routes and Bikeways
Several local bus routes provide service to the community within the 0.5-mile radius as shown in Figure 3-9. The Elgin/Third Ward station is directly served by routes on Scott Street. Bus service on Polk Street and Cullen Boulevard lies within the 0.5-mile station area (see Figure 4-8).

Painted bike lanes are available along Cullen Boulevard; however there are no bike facilities directly connected to the rail station.
Figure 4-8: Bus Routes & Bikeways

Note: Due to the timing of the implementation of New Bus Network, the Bus Routes and Bikeways map does not reflect METRO’s current network.
4.5 Market Trends and Recommendations
The following section summarizes detailed market findings and opportunities regarding the development outlook in the Elgin/Third Ward Station area.

The development community observed that the Elgin/Third Ward area would eventually see major redevelopment and investment, in the medium (three to five years) to long term (about ten years). Retail and commercial investment will be followed by a critical mass of residential development in the Third Ward, not just in the areas bordering Midtown, Downtown, and EaDo. This is according to CDS’s market assessment report. The group felt that the current level of retail and commercial businesses within the CMA adequately met the needs of local residents, students, and employees who live and work in the CMA.

4.5.1 Market Trends (CDS Market Research)

**Single-Family Housing**
Single family housing near the Elgin Station is made up primarily of older, single family detached homes, many of which tend to be less than 1,500 square feet and 60 to 70 years old. After a long period of general decline, the area is beginning to experience new demand for housing and home sale prices are gradually increasing. With considerably higher demand in nearby Midtown and EaDo, the Third Ward represents one of few remaining places close to Downtown, where developers can purchase land (either vacant lots or lots which can be redeveloped) and build new single family housing which can be marketed to a new generation and a wider range of incomes. While new home construction is not prevalent within the Elgin Station 0.5-mile radius, it is expected to become increasingly common over the next several years.

**Multi-Family and Student Housing**
The CMA has a total of 1,974 multi-family units in 32 different complexes. The majority of the units available are older complexes classified as B or C, with the average year of construction being 1971. CDS reports that new multi-family projects planned for the CMA include four complexes with 541 total units; three class A and one class B apartment project. Two of these projects will be market rate, one is student housing, and one is affordable housing. No new multi-family projects are being planned for the 0.5-mile radius but three lots near the Elgin Station are currently reported as under contract by student housing developers. As the student population continues to grow (and as UH encourages further on or near-campus living for students) there will continue to be demand for student housing near the Main Campus and at light rail accessible locations.

**Retail**
With a high daytime population associated with the UH Main Campus, positive growth expectations for future student enrollment, and the beginning of residential redevelopment in the area north and west of the 0.5-mile radius, the CMA stands as a promising location for new future retail development and redevelopment. However, according to local brokers and agents, serious retail development and redevelopment will only occur once new townhome development to the north and west begins to develop in all areas of the Greater Third Ward—including the 0.5-mile radius. Larger retail development will also take time to occur as the large anchors needed for these projects demand significantly higher demographic indicators before making an investment.
4.5.2 Opportunity Sites

Based on the recommendations, TOD opportunities were identified around the Elgin/Third Ward station. Table 4-4 and Figure 4-9 provide an overview of these opportunities. The numbered rows on the table correspond to numbered sites on the map.

**Table 4-4: Opportunities Matrix**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>CURRENT USE</th>
<th>PROPOSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.   | East and adjacent to the station platform | Strip Center; former bookstore  
Dominos Pizza  
Asian restaurant | Multi-Family  
Campus Housing |
| 2.   | West and northwest of station between Elgin, Scott, Canfield and Drew Streets | Single family and vacant  
One listed commercial parcel | Multi-Family  
Campus Housing |
| 3.   | Bounded by Lucinda, Milby and Rosalie Streets | Single family residential | Multi-Family  
Campus Housing |
| 4.   | Southwest of station on Scott Street between Simmons and Reeves Streets | Residential and vacant uses | Retail Commercial |
| 5.   | Southwest of station on Scott Street between Reeves and Holman Streets | Commercial and public/institutional  
Vacant and multi-family residential | Mixed Used  
LAI Design Group Provisional Plan –University (Incomplete) |
4.5.3 Station Visualization

Based on the proposed development opportunities identified at each station, visualizations were prepared to show the type of scaled development and redevelopment that could be expected over time. The figures below show this development in stages ranging from near-term to long-term.

Elgin/Third Ward

1. Station activity spurs infill development in vacant buildings adjacent to the station. Demand from adjacent land uses, i.e. University of Houston and Texas Southern University, will contribute to development activity.

2. Initial residential activity can serve as student housing as well as residential for the neighborhood.

3. Further development adds more retail and takes advantage of the residential population. Denser development close to the station encourages a walkable, small-scale density that can create an urban campus environment.
4.6 Station Area Improvements

The following section includes recommendations for improvements to sidewalk infrastructure, bike and pedestrian amenities and connectivity; as well as recommendations on parking management within the station areas.

Public realm improvements such as these discussed below would provide better access to opportunity sites as shown in Figure 4-9.

- Connect disjointed sections of Adair Street via the intersection with Holman Street for better street network connectivity.
- Adding signed bike lanes to Elgin and connecting with bike lanes along Cullen Boulevard will provide direct bike connectivity from the station.
- Gaps within the sidewalk network should be addressed, by filling in missing links within the study area and widening sidewalks where appropriate. Enclosing drainage ditches throughout study area will ensure safety of pedestrians and cyclists.
- As sites within the station area get redeveloped, bike parking and bike storage could be incorporated into these projects, particularly at sites to the northwest of Elgin Street and Scott Street.
Figure 4-10: Accessibility Walkshed
5    MACGREGOR PARK/MLK STATION

The station area lies within the 0.5-mile radius of the MacGregor Park/MLK station, which is located at the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard (MLK) and OST (See Figure 5-1). Most of the study area lies within the GSEMD boundaries (Figure 5-2). A portion of the study area lies within the OST/Almeda TIRZ (Figure 5-3). The management districts are shown in Figure 5-2. The OST/Almeda TIRZ is shown in Figure 5-3.
Figure 5-1: Study Area and CMA
Figure 5-2: Area Management Districts

Source: Harris County Appraisal District, 2014
Figure 5-3: Area Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones
5.1 Demographics

Key demographic drivers in the MLK/MacGregor station area are a positive (though moderate) growth in population, employment and income from 2000 to 2014, with positive projections up to 2018 as shown in Table 5-1.

A trend that is seen across other corridors as well is of the percentage increase number of households outpacing population growth, because of household sizes getting smaller. Sixty-two percent of the housing is owner occupied in the station area as shown in Figure 5-4.

As with the Leeland/ Third Ward and Elgin/Third Ward stations, the median household income in the study area is approximately $30,000, considerably lesser than that of Houston MSA and Harris County. While this is an economically depressed area, this indicator may be exaggerated because of the high university population in the station area.
### Table 5-1 Historic Growth and Projections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>2000 CENSUS</th>
<th>2010 CENSUS</th>
<th>2013 ESTIMATE</th>
<th>2018 PROJECTION</th>
<th>GROWTH 00-10</th>
<th>GROWTH 10-13</th>
<th>GROWTH 13-18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.5-Mile Radius</td>
<td>2,228</td>
<td>2,464</td>
<td>2,508</td>
<td>2,607</td>
<td>10.59%</td>
<td>1.79%</td>
<td>3.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMA</td>
<td>21,847</td>
<td>23,191</td>
<td>23,486</td>
<td>24,231</td>
<td>6.15%</td>
<td>1.27%</td>
<td>3.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris County</td>
<td>3,400,577</td>
<td>4,092,459</td>
<td>4,285,034</td>
<td>4,626,152</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston MSA</td>
<td>4,693,140</td>
<td>5,920,416</td>
<td>6,223,959</td>
<td>6,747,614</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOUSEHOLDS</th>
<th>2000 CENSUS</th>
<th>2010 CENSUS</th>
<th>2013 ESTIMATE</th>
<th>2018 PROJECTION</th>
<th>GROWTH 00-10</th>
<th>GROWTH 10-13</th>
<th>GROWTH 13-18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.5-Mile Radius</td>
<td>855</td>
<td>973</td>
<td>1,007</td>
<td>1,070</td>
<td>13.75%</td>
<td>3.53%</td>
<td>6.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMA</td>
<td>6,629</td>
<td>6,992</td>
<td>7178</td>
<td>7,539</td>
<td>5.48%</td>
<td>2.66%</td>
<td>5.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris County</td>
<td>1,205,527</td>
<td>1,435,155</td>
<td>1,500,011</td>
<td>1,619,300</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston MSA</td>
<td>1,648,146</td>
<td>2,062,529</td>
<td>2,166,191</td>
<td>2,348,586</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Developmental Potential, METRO MacGregor Park/MLK Station, CDS 2015.
American Community Survey Census Data 2012; PCensus for Map Info, Copyright 2013 Tetrad Corporation
Figure 5-4: Owner and Renter Occupied Housing
5.2 Land Use

Residential land uses in the station area are concentrated within the southwest quadrant of the station. Most of the residential area contains a mix of various types of housing. There are larger, more expensive, architecturally distinctive homes on large lots, and smaller more affordable, production homes on small lots (see Figure 5-5). The University of Houston dominates the land use in the northernmost portion of the CMA and within station area of the MacGregor/MLK rail station. The station area contains student housing; the majority of which is owned and managed by UH. One new complex called “The Vue on MacGregor” has been completed and is near capacity with students already moving in. The 115 room multi-story complex is located at MacGregor Way and Calhoun Rd and will be the “first privately owned off-campus community” serving the UH student population.

Peck Elementary and four places of worship including the Shrine of the Black Madonna are clustered within the southern edge of the 0.5-mile radius of MacGregor Park/MLK Station and are listed in Table 5-2. Peck Elementary School is south and west of the station. The location and types of the institutional activities in the 0.5-mile radius are shown in Figure 5-6.

Table 5-2: Schools and Places of Worship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Peck Elementary School</td>
<td>Elementary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pan-African Orthodox</td>
<td>Christian - Shrine of the Black Madonna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Black Christian</td>
<td>Christian - Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pan African Orthodox Christian Church</td>
<td>Christian - Shrine of the Black Madonna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5-5: Land Use
Figure 5-6: Institutional Activities
5.3 Connectivity

The MacGregor Park/MLK Station contains the Riverside Terrace and MacGregor Place neighborhoods which were designed as typical post-war suburban neighborhoods with curvilinear streets and long blocks. The MacGregor Park/MLK Station is positioned within the median of MLK Boulevard immediately to the north of the intersection with OST. The pedestrian entrance/exit is provided via sidewalks within the widened median.

Sidewalks exist along the major thoroughfares including MLK and OST. New sidewalks are being constructed in the Riverside Terrace\(^7\) (Figure 5-7). A signalized pedestrian crossing has been provided to enable pedestrians to cross MLK Boulevard and the light rail tracks near the intersection with Arvilla Lane. Other neighborhood streets in the station area do not have sidewalks.

Traffic on MLK operates at an acceptable level of service even with the rail line but as land uses change, roadway congestion could become an issue. Levels-of-service do not exceed LOS B.

Limited private parking at small local businesses, MacGregor Park and at the University of Houston is available. No public parking or drop-off space exists adjacent to the station. All off-street parking is associated with private commercial uses and on-street parking is internal to the neighborhoods and used by residents. No on-street parking is allowed on OST or MLK Boulevard.

Table 5-3 shows the connectivity and accessibility of the station area by the various modes of transportation. The area around the station is moderately accessible with the exception of designated parking and drop-off space, which is non-existent.

\(^7\) New four-foot wide sidewalks have been added to both sides of Winnetka Lane, Arvilla Lane, and Marietta Lane
Figure 5-7: Street Network and Sidewalks
## Table 5-3: Connectivity and Accessibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCESS</th>
<th>GOOD</th>
<th>FAIR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Street Grid</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fair street grid with long blocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pedestrian (Block Sizes)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sidewalks exist along the major thoroughfares                                                                                           New sidewalks being constructed in the Riverside Terrace neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vehicles</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Traffic does not exceed LOS B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADA</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>ADA ramps exist on majority of sidewalks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bicycles</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Extensive bikeway along Brays Bayou                                                                                                      Bike lane on Calhoun Road connects to bayou                                                                                   No connection to the station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjacent Parking</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>No off-street parking available adjacent to the station                                                                                     On-street parking in the neighborhood for local residents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kiss &amp; Ride Drop Off</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>No off-street space available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: METRO Southeast Corridor Traffic Report for Final Design, 2009*
5.4 Bus Routes and Bikeways
The station area is directly served by routes on OST Boulevard and on MLK Boulevard. (Figure 5-8). Bus routes on Calhoun Road are within the 0.5-mile radius of MLK/ MacGregor Station.

Painted bike lanes are available along Calhoun Road and the lanes connect with multi-use trails along Brays Bayou and within MacGregor Park. OST does not have accommodations for cyclists.
Note: Due to the timing of the implementation of New Bus Network, the Bus Routes and Bikeways map does not reflect METRO’s current network.
5.5 Market Trends and Recommendations

The following section summarizes detailed market findings and opportunities regarding the development outlook in the MLK/MacGregor Park Station area.

Area developers offered similar observations about the MLK/ MacGregor station area as with both the Leeland and Elgin station areas, stating that the area would eventually see major redevelopment in the medium (three to five years) to the long term (about ten years). Retail and commercial investment will be followed by a critical mass of residential development in the Third Ward, not just in the areas bordering Midtown, Downtown, and EaDo.

Community and area developers also felt that the current level of retail and commercial businesses within the CMA adequately met the needs of local residents, students, and employees who live and work in the CMA.

5.5.1 Market Trends (CDS Market Research)

Single-Family Housing
The MacGregor Park/MLK 0.5- mile radius and CMA represent a prime location for middle income homebuyers seeking to be as near to the Medical Center as they can afford, especially with the new light rail. Based on the success of the Villas on South MacGregor and the Oasis In-Town on MLK Boulevard, the CMA is estimated to have one to two additional townhome developments in the next three to five years amounting to roughly 60 to 90 units with sale prices in the upper $200,000s. One of these townhome developments may be located in the 0.5-mile radius, as vacant parcels are available. However the opportunities to redevelop existing residential property would be unlikely as deed restrictions are in place for much of the area.

Multi-Family and Student Housing
There are currently 2,523 managed multi-family units in 29 different complexes. Most of the multi-family units in the CMA are in market rate complexes, but four are operated as student housing—totaling 886 units. Multi-family plans for the CMA include three projects with 488 total units, all class A. Two of the complexes are being planned as student housing and will total 266 units when completed. As the student population continues to grow (and as UH encourages further on or near-campus living for students) there will continue to be demand for student housing near the Main Campus and at light rail accessible locations.

Retail
With a high daytime population associated with the UH Main Campus, positive growth expectations for future student enrollment, and the beginning of residential redevelopment in the area, the CMA stands as a promising location for new future retail development and redevelopment over the long term. However, in the short term CDS does not see major new retail or office space moving into the station area—at least until the rail line has displayed consistently strong ridership numbers and the major vacant lots in the 0.5-mile radius begin developing. The owners and managers of the Page Center and the property across the street, which represent the only existing retail near the MacGregor Station, agree and feel that redevelopment for them is around ten years away.

5.5.2 Opportunity Sites
Based on the recommendations, TOD opportunities were identified around the MacGregor Park/MLK station. Table 5-4 and Figure 5-9 provide an overview of these opportunities. The numbered rows on the table correspond to numbered sites on the map.
Table 5-4: Opportunities Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>CURRENT USE</th>
<th>PROPOSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>NE corner of Martin Luther King (MLK) Boulevard and Old Spanish Trail (OST); smaller parcel to the north of Brays Bayou between Spur 5 and MLK Boulevard</td>
<td>Bought by the University of Houston from MacGregor Estate during the development of Purple Line. 43 acres plus additional 1 acre site to the north of Brays Bayou</td>
<td>Potential UH student housing, other UH buildings, and retail. The number of units is not defined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>SW corner of OST and Spur 5</td>
<td>Undeveloped and abandoned for sale</td>
<td>Potential retail or mixed-use depending on development of above site by UH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>SE corner of MLK Boulevard and OST frontage along OST (5100 OST)</td>
<td>Undeveloped, formerly Ford’s Auto Sales for sale by New Quest Properties 6 acre site</td>
<td>Potential retail or mixed-use depending on development of above site by UH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>SE corner of MLK Boulevard and OST (4901 to 4999 OST)</td>
<td>Red Rooster bar and lounge</td>
<td>Potential retail or mixed-use depending on development of above site by UH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>SW corner of MLK Boulevard and OST (4802 to 4822 MLK Boulevard)</td>
<td>Insurance, nail salon, Nick’s Grocery and other small retail</td>
<td>Potential retail or mixed-use depending on development of above site by UH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5-9: Opportunity Sites
5.5.3 Station Visualization

Based on the proposed development opportunities identified at each station, visualizations were prepared to show the type of scaled development and redevelopment that could be expected over time. The figures below show this development in stages ranging from near-term to long-term.

MacGregor Park/MLK Station

1. Station activity spurs infill development in vacant and underutilized buildings adjacent to the station.

2. Moderate density, mixed-use development providing convenient access to the park, Universities, and Downtown.

3. Further development adds more retail and takes advantage of the residential population. Denser development close to the station encourages a walkable, small-scale environment.
5.6 Station Area Improvements

The following section includes recommendations for improvements to sidewalk infrastructure, bike and pedestrian amenities and connectivity; as well as recommendations on parking management within the station areas.

Public realm improvements such as those discussed below and shown in Figure 5-10 would provide better access to opportunity sites as shown in Figure 5-9.

- Enhance sidewalk connectivity by widening and enhancing sidewalk infrastructure within opportunity sites to the southeast of the intersection with MLK Boulevard.
- Coordinate with University of Houston on development of tract to the northeast of the rail station to ensure a walkable grid is incorporated into the site and creates access to the station.
- If warranted by demand and determined to be feasible by an engineering and safety review, an addition of a pedestrian entrance/exit to the north of the rail station is recommended. This would provide a street connection across MLK Boulevard linking MacGregor Park to the new development on the UH owned tract.
- Further discussion and coordination activities with the University of Houston better integrate recommendations from METRO’s TOD study into UH’s Masterplan effort regarding street connections, bike accommodations, and trails.
- Investigate possible extension of bike lanes from Cullen Boulevard to the rail station via either the facility within OST or within MacGregor Park.
- Signal timing at the intersection of the MLK Boulevard and OST/US 90A presents extensive waiting time for pedestrians and may require review and adjustment.
Figure 5-10: Accessibility Walkshed
6  PALM CENTER TRANSIT CENTER STATION

The Palm Center Station Transit Center (TC) is at the terminus of the Southeast LRT line or the Purple line, and lies on Griggs Road. The CMA contains the station area and provides a context for the amount and type of development, which the station area could potentially capture as depicted in the Figure 6-1. Most of the study area lies within the GEEMD Management District boundaries as shown in Figure 6-2. A portion of the station area is also a part of the OST/Almeda TIRZ (see Figure 6-3).
Figure 6-1: Study Area and CMA
Figure 6-2: Area Management Districts
Figure 6-3: Area Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones
6.1 Demographics

Demographic analysis of population, employment and income shows an area with moderate population growth, however with an aging demographic. During the time period from 2000 to 2010, population in the 0.5-mile radius had increased in by 6.3 percent and households by 16.0 percent; with positive growth trends projected for the next decade.

The median household income in the study area is approximately $31,987 and approximately 23 percent of the population earns less than $15,000 annually. Fourteen percent of the residents in the 0.5-mile radius around the station area has an advanced (bachelors, masters, professional or doctorate degree) degree; lower than the CMA (18 percent) and lower than both Harris County (27 percent) and the Houston MSA (28 percent).

The majority of the residences in the station area are renter occupied (67 percent). Figure 6-4 shows the concentration of rental properties to the south of the station.
**Table 6-1: Historic Growth and Projections**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>地理区域</th>
<th>2000 CENSUS</th>
<th>2010 CENSUS</th>
<th>2013 ESTIMATE</th>
<th>2018 PROJECTION</th>
<th>GROWTH 00-10</th>
<th>GROWTH 10-13</th>
<th>GROWTH 13-18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.5-Mile Radius</td>
<td>2,758</td>
<td>2,933</td>
<td>3,002</td>
<td>3,154</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMA</td>
<td>25,161</td>
<td>26,375</td>
<td>25,550*</td>
<td>27,934</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>-3.1%*</td>
<td>9.3%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris County</td>
<td>3,400,577</td>
<td>4,092,459</td>
<td>4,285,034</td>
<td>4,626,152</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston MSA</td>
<td>4,693,140</td>
<td>5,920,416</td>
<td>6,223,959</td>
<td>6,747,614</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>地理区域</th>
<th>2000 CENSUS</th>
<th>2010 CENSUS</th>
<th>2013 ESTIMATE</th>
<th>2018 PROJECTION</th>
<th>GROWTH 00-10</th>
<th>GROWTH 10-13</th>
<th>GROWTH 13-18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.5-Mile Radius</td>
<td>975</td>
<td>1,131</td>
<td>1,157</td>
<td>1,214</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMA</td>
<td>8,466</td>
<td>8,946</td>
<td>8,249*</td>
<td>9,664</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>-7.8%*</td>
<td>17.2%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris County</td>
<td>1,205,527</td>
<td>1,435,155</td>
<td>1,500,011</td>
<td>1,619,300</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston MSA</td>
<td>1,648,146</td>
<td>2,062,529</td>
<td>2,166,191</td>
<td>2,348,586</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Developmental Potential, METRO Palm Center Transit Center Station, CDS 2015. American Community Survey Census Data 2012; PCensus for Map Info, Copyright 2013 Tetrad Corporation*
Figure 6-4: Owner and Renter Occupied Housing
6.2 Land Use

As shown in Figure 6-5, the land uses in the CMA are largely single family residential. There are also large parcels of railroad right-of-way (ROW) and industrial uses. Parks in the CMA include MacGregor Parkway along Brays Bayou as it winds into MacGregor Park. Gragg Park is also located within the CMA.

Land uses within the 0.5-mile radius of the station are similar to those in the CMA, mostly single family detached homes, scattered townhomes and apartments, active and vacant commercial/retail and industrial tracts. As with the CMA, there are large areas of vacant undevelopable land including rail yards and the ROW of Spur 5. Across from the station is the Park at Palm Center which includes trails, playgrounds and picnic area.

According to the Harris County Appraisal District, there is one school, Kipp Academy, and six places of worship including the Shrine of the Black Madonna in the 0.5-mile radius of Palm Center Station listed in Table 6-2. These places of worship are clustered in the residential areas of the neighborhood. Kipp Academy is northwest of the station and could influence future commercial development. The location and types of the institutional activities in the 0.5-mile radius are shown in Figure 6-6.

Table 6-2: Schools and Places of Worship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kipp Academy</td>
<td>Elementary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Palms Center Church Of Christ</td>
<td>Christian - Church of Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pan-African Orthodox Christian Church</td>
<td>Christian - Shrine of the Black Madonna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Black Christian</td>
<td>Christian - Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Palms Center Church of Christ</td>
<td>Christian - Church of Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pan African Orthodox Christian Church</td>
<td>Christian - Shrine of the Black Madonna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 6-5: Land Use
Figure 6-6: Institutional Activities
6.3 Connectivity

The Palm Center Station is located within the median of Griggs Road immediately to the west of the intersection with Royal Palms Street. A signalized pedestrian crosswalk is located at Griggs and Beekman Roads to access the station platform. Pedestrian access to the platform from the west is not provided.

There is ample parking adjacent to the Palm Center Station at the Palm Center and while it is for use of Palm Center patrons only, there is a potential for riders to use the lot in the future. All other parking in the station area is limited to residential streets or within adjacent gated apartment communities.

Table 6-3 provides a qualitative assessment of the connectivity and accessibility conditions within the station area. The area around the station is fairly accessible with the exception of the rail line serving as a barrier between north and south Griggs Road which prevents left turns on Griggs Road between MLK Boulevard and the freight railroad tracks.

While the neighborhood and sidewalks pre-date ADA requirements, corners have been retrofitted with ADA ramps. Sidewalks exist on Griggs Road, MLK Jr. Boulevard, and Milart Street with ADA ramps at the intersections of all side streets (Figure 6-7). Sidewalks are discontinuous in the mix of apartments and light industrial uses north of Griggs Road, and very few exist in the single family neighborhood behind that.

Traffic congestion is not an issue with roadways operating at LOS C or better. The only exception would be the railroad crossing east of the station at Griggs Road that frequently brings auto traffic to a standstill.
### Table 6-3: Connectivity and Accessibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCESS</th>
<th>GOOD</th>
<th>FAIR</th>
<th>POOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street Grid</td>
<td>Traditional suburban development with long blocks and curvilinear streets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian (Block Sizes)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sidewalks on Griggs, MLK, and Milart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sidewalks in McGregor Palms neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Very few sidewalks in neighborhood north of Griggs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles</td>
<td>Roadways operate at LOS C or better</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADA</td>
<td>Ramps at sidewalks, Crosswalk at Beekman and station platform.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bike route signage along Griggs, but no pavement markings were seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjacent Parking</td>
<td>Surplus parking at Palm Center parking lot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiss &amp; Ride Drop Off</td>
<td>Sufficient space in Palm Center parking lot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: METRO Southeast Corridor Traffic Report for Final Design, 2009*
Figure 6-7: Street Network and Sidewalks
6.4 Bus Routes and Bikeways

The Palm Center station is served by routes on Griggs Road and MLK Blvd, (Figure 6-8). Routes serving Mykawa Road are also within the 0.5-mile station area.

Bike route signage is seen along Griggs Road but there are no designated lanes or other pavement markings.
Figure 6-8: Bus Routes & Bikeways

Note: Due to the timing of the implementation of New Bus Network, the Bus Routes and Bikeways map does not reflect METRO’s current network.
6.5 Market Trends and Recommendations

The development community observed that while the Palm Center station area has potential, there are certain barriers to immediate investment. The Village at Palm Center, currently under development by the ITEX Group, will be a major catalyst for the station area. The current master planning effort of the Palm Center by HDBI Inc. site will also be catalytic.

Another physical barrier is the access to and from Palm Center for pedestrians and automobiles. Pedestrians must walk a long distance to cross into the strip center and vehicles cannot turn left out of Palm Center or turn in to the Palm Center from Griggs Street westbound. Additionally, trains still block Griggs Road immediately east of the station.

6.5.1 Market Trends (CDS Market Research)

**Single Family Townhomes**

Within the 0.5- mile radius of the Palm Center Station new townhome development of one to two new projects (depending on the availability and size of land tracts) would be supportable in the next three to five years. Pricing for the supportable 60 to 90 new units will be in the upper $200,000s.

**Multi-Family**

The new Villages at Palm Center will add 222 new mixed income apartments to the station area by 2015. CDS believes at least one new additional apartment development will be supportable in the next three to five years in the station area or close environs.

**Retail**

There are still numerous vacant land parcels and empty retail buildings to continue retail/service expansion for the next three to five years. The Palm Center Station area should expect from one to two net new business openings per year up to year three. By year three up to year five retail and service establishments should increase by two to four per year. These businesses will likely be neighborhood-oriented, serving primarily the immediately surrounding moderate-income population. Rental rates are low at $1.00 per square foot and brokers report vacant land is selling for about $3.00 to $5.00 per square foot, increasing to the west toward the Griggs Road / OST intersection. Sites on MLK Boulevard and Griggs Road northwest of MLK Boulevard will be significantly more attractive for retail due to having fewer constraints on traffic movement.

6.5.2 Opportunity Sites

Based on the recommendations TOD opportunities were identified around the Palm Center station. Table 6-4 and Figure 6-9 provide an overview of these opportunities. The numbered rows on the table correspond to numbered sites on the map.
## Table 6-4: Opportunities Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Current Use</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.   | The Palm Center Site             | • Assorted government offices  
                                 | • Public Library  
                                 | • County’s Health System Offices  
                                 | • METRO’s rail corridor stakeholder office | • Under consideration and further study  
                                 | • Recommend a mini grid while redeveloping the Palm Center site, to mitigate some of the access issues in the station area  
                                 | • Potential opportunity to connect Cavanaugh across to Griggs Road to provide access to residential neighborhoods south of Palm Center and through the proposed ITEX development |
| 2.   | YMCA                             | • Houston Texas YMCA  
                                 | • Major and popular neighborhood amenity | N/A                                                                                                                                 |
| 3.   | North of Griggs Road             | • Blightened commercial properties  
                                 | • Assorted Commercial currently – most buildings are in disrepair and are ground floor only  
                                 | • Limited access to Palm Center and parcels north of Griggs Road. Would impede successful development of the site into retail, commercial | Site may be well suited for townhome development  
                                 | Commercial uses are difficult because of access issues on Griggs Road |
| 4.   | East of MLK Boulevard            | Vacant Purchase by Midtown Redevelopment Authority | Future Townhome development  
                                 | Could support approximately 50 to 70 townhomes |
| 5.   | Northwest corner of MLK Boulevard and Griggs Road | Vacant commercial | Proposed site for City of Houston public library |
| 6.   | Southeast corner MLK Boulevard and Griggs Road | Formerly Kings Best Flea Market | • The Village of Palm Center is a 9+ acre development planned by the ITEX Group  
                                 | • This project will be a mixed income development consisting of 154 apartments and 68 townhomes for a total of 222 new units  
                                 | • A new street will be constructed separating the apartments from the townhomes and a 260 space 3 story parking garage will be included  
                                 | • Will include 14,000 sq. ft. of retail/service space at street level |
Figure 6-9: Opportunity Sites
6.5.3 Station Visualization

Based on the proposed development opportunities identified at each station, visualizations were prepared to show the type of scaled development and redevelopment that could be expected over time. The figures below show this development in stages ranging from near-term to long-term.

Palm Center Transit Center Station

1. Initial 3-4 story mixed-use development composed of ground floor retail with apartments on the upper floors designed to fit with the character of the neighborhood.

2. Subsequent development brings a mix of styles and begins to create a sense of place and focus beyond just the Palm Center institutions.

3. Further development adds more residential with retail and dining to take advantage of the growing density. Denser development close to the station encourages a walkable, small-scale environment.
6.6 Station Area Improvements

The following section includes recommendations for improvements to sidewalk infrastructure, bike and pedestrian amenities and connectivity; as well as recommendations on parking management within the station areas.

Public realm improvements such as these discussed below and shown in Figure 6-10 would provide better access to opportunity sites as shown in Figure 6-9.

- As the redevelopment of the Palm Center site proceeds, the study recommends a mini grid overlaid on the site by extending Cavanaugh Street across the existing Palm Center site to connect with Griggs Road. Currently, the crossover and OCS (Overhead Catenary System) pole block this intersection and will require discussion and coordination with METRO Engineering and Rail Operations to explore feasible alternatives, such as relocating street connections to the west of the crossover.
- Add on-street parking where feasible and/or structured parking wrapped by potential mixed-use development within the transit oriented district. Parking should be shared by retail customers, residents, and transit users.
- Bike parking facilities are recommended within the METRO Bike and Ride plan at the Palm Center Station.
- The Palm Center Station area and the cross streets should be a high priority for lighting and sidewalk improvements.
Figure 6-10: Accessibility Walkshed
7  PUBLIC POLICY FRAMEWORK

7.1 Why Transit Oriented Development?

7.1.1 Benefits

TOD offers substantial benefits to community residents, developers, the local economy, public agencies and the transit system. Successful TOD can result in economic, transportation, health, and community benefits. By consistently identifying and communicating these benefits, METRO and other stakeholders can support the implementation policies and programs that will make TOD more likely to occur. The information below and in Table 7-1 identifies more specific benefits in each of these areas.

**ECONOMY**

TOD connects people and jobs. By bringing jobs, housing, and services closer together and linking them with transit, TOD can help shorten travel times and improve connections between people and jobs. For the last few decades, business development and job growth has been expanding outward in suburbs and exurbs, leaving the working poor in inner cities and older suburbs either unable to access those jobs, or spending a large portion of their income and time traveling to work. Redirecting the majority of growth to areas served by transit will help alleviate this spatial disconnect between the location of jobs and the homes of the labor force. Additionally, as TOD expands the range of housing options and retail types, this in turn helps attract new residents and businesses from outside the city and region.

TOD can be more profitable for developers and investors than traditional, suburban development. Land acquisition and construction costs may be higher, especially for urban infill, but higher-density projects produce more residential units for sale or rent as well as greater retail square footage. Developments centered around transit infrastructure are designed to attract a percentage of residents and retail customers that will use transit, allowing developers to replace some parking spaces with higher return uses. Furthermore, depending on the TOD or joint development role METRO takes in a project, the agency could see direct returns on investments through rents or other fees, which would add an additional source of revenue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7-1: TOD Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECONOMY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Offers a higher return on investment for developers and financial institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Better connects people and jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Expands the range of housing options and retail types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Generates new jobs, entrepreneurship, increased spending, tax revenues, and other economic spillover effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Expands choice of travel modes, decreasing automobile reliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Increases transit ridership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Helps the transit system maximize service efficiencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Helps reduce traffic congestion on major roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Increases physical activity by encouraging walking and bicycling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Improves air quality from reduced emissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Improves safety from reduced crash rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Increases property values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Helps stabilize neighborhoods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Lowers transportation costs allowing redirected spending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Conserves land</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TOD has been shown to attract higher rates of jobs and companies due to the diverse labor supply in close proximity and easy access through multiple modes of transportation. Local entrepreneurs, who thrive on foot-traffic, can take advantage of the business opportunities afforded by the compact development, smaller building footprints, and pedestrian traffic within TODs. This effect would be considerably stronger if TOD is part of a larger, comprehensive economic development strategy geared towards growing small business and supporting local entrepreneurs. All of this can benefit local jurisdictions in the form of higher revenues from ad valorem and sales taxes generated by these projects.

**TRANSPORTATION**

METRO, in particular, has a direct benefit in the development of TOD around its infrastructure and services. Not only is increased ridership a proven benefit, but longer-sustaining ridership levels with increased fare-box revenues have been shown in other cities with TOD. The long-term transit ridership gains would enable METRO to potentially reduce the operating cost per passenger or invest in higher quality service. By locating transit services near greater concentrations of housing, METRO could also maximize service efficiencies, which would allow for greater funding flexibility for the agency. Regionally, ridership-generating TOD enables reduction or better management of congestion on major roadways, which can free up capacity for other travelers including freight and truck travel.

**HEALTH**

The transportation system is a major part of the built environment and currently poses barriers to better health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and American Heart Association (AHA) advocate for changes to the built environment, street level design and community development that promote opportunities for physical activity as strategies to combat obesity and heart disease. Implementing TOD would help address these issues by enabling and encouraging alternative modes of transportation, including walking, biking and transit.

TOD also has the capability to improve air quality by shifting automobile trips to walking, bicycling and transit trips which in turn decreases the emissions from vehicle usage. Cleaner air leads to fewer symptoms and illnesses for those suffering from asthma and other chronic respiratory conditions. Health professionals and advocates have become new partners in promoting and planning for active transportation. A well designed TOD will encourage multiple modes of transportation in a context that creates a safer environment. This is done through roadway and pedestrian realm design, lighting, signage and ancillary facilities that reduce conflict points and places high importance on visibility and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.

**COMMUNITY**

Benefits to the City and community include increases in property values due to proximity to transit, high-quality retail, and job access, as well as new community investments. Well designed and developed TOD that is inclusive of affordable housing opportunities and new business development can also stabilize neighborhoods in the long-term and help manage the pressures from gentrification. Public agencies, affordable housing advocates, and private developers should act decisively to plan and coordinate affordability incentives and/or subsidies to secure long-term the availability of affordable housing adjacent to transit facilities. Households tend to experience a decrease in costs, in both time and money, for traveling between home, work, shopping, and other activities. Household income not spent on gas, parking, and car payments can be saved or redirected to spending at local businesses. TOD and infill development generally use existing infrastructure, and would maximize the public sector’s return on investment for any new or expanded infrastructure. Whether infill or not, TOD consumes less land than low-density, car-oriented growth, thus reducing the need to convert open spaces into new development.

**7.2 Who Is Involved With TOD?**

**7.2.1 Agency Roles & Responsibilities**

Perhaps the most critical first step in TOD planning is identifying a diverse set of stakeholders that need to be involved. The success of TOD rests as much on analyzing, directing, and meeting market demand as it does on sound land use and transportation planning. An effective TOD plan will depend on the active involvement and input of an array of public agencies, private-sector developers and financial firms, non-profits, and community organizations. Table 7-2, below, provides a general overview of the types of stakeholders that might be involved in TOD planning and implementation and their likely roles.
Table 7-2: Roles and Responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>METRO</th>
<th>LOCAL JURISDICTION</th>
<th>NON-PROFIT</th>
<th>DEVELOPER</th>
<th>MPO</th>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>FEDERAL AGENCIES</th>
<th>COMMUNITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Market TOD Opportunities</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentives for TOD</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure Sufficient Infrastructure is in Place</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembling Land for TOD</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing &amp; Funding</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station Area Planning, Partnering, Project Development near transit</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable Housing</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permitting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Revitalization / Preservation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
METRO has several roles it can play in the TOD process. First and foremost, the transit agency’s primary responsibility is to provide high quality transit service and ensure safe operations of and access to its transit facilities. While TOD principles generally enhance station access and safety, as the land owner of the transit facilities, METRO should not encourage any development that doesn’t enhance its facilities. METRO is also a development partner through its joint development capabilities. Joint development was successfully utilized in the development of the Cypress Park & Ride. METRO is also capable of providing planning support with local governments to develop station areas by sharing information about its facilities and services, collaborating with local governments and potentially matching funds in certain instances.

Local governments are instrumental in the development of TOD. As this effort focuses on key METRO light rail stations and park & rides, the main local agency to engage with is the City of Houston, although other jurisdictions such as Harris County and municipal management districts are important to consider as well. Local governments facilitate the community process with neighborhood stakeholders during the planning and development process. This is also an important point where METRO and local governments should work together. Local governments are also responsible for developing the regulatory environment, implementing policies, plans, financing tools and issuing permits, which make them a crucial partner in station areas adjacent to transit facilities. METRO should continuously coordinate with local governments to ensure that land-use policies and incentives foster TOD and transit supportive areas.

Local governments also possess multiple tools that are important to encouraging TOD such as urban design guidelines, land assemblage, building infrastructure, parking guidelines and management, and utilizing TIRZ and municipal management districts. Lastly, local governments are responsible for the establishment of policy, regulations, and enforcement related to affordable housing issues. METRO should be committed to encouraging a diverse range of housing options, including affordable units in close proximity to its transit services. METRO should work with local governments to understand the affordable housing needs of the communities and encourage TOD/joint development that addresses affordable housing goals of local communities and the region.

Developers, including non-profit organizations such as Avenue CDC, are responsible for working with local governments to draft and finalize site plans, obtain necessary approvals, secure financing, complete land assembly, and manage construction of the project. Through METRO’s joint development policy, the transit agency could also have a direct relationship with developers. In joint development circumstances, developers would typically be responsible for integrating METRO’s facilities into the development, provide primary funding for infrastructure associated with the joint development, and ensuring all approvals are in place.

Funding partners are also an important stakeholder as funding can be for infrastructure construction, development of plans, and more. Funding partners can span from the MPO (Houston-Galveston Area Council), state (Texas Department of Transportation, Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, etc.) and federal agencies (Federal Transit Administration, Housing & Urban Development, etc.). Typically federal funding sources will flow through a local government sponsor such as the City of Houston, METRO, Harris County, H-GAC, etc. Non-profits are also a valuable funding resource and include organizations such as Avenue CDC, Covenant Community Capital Corporation, and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) who provides loans, grants, equity investments, policy support, and technical and management assistance. METRO should coordinate with potential funding partners in the development of TOD supportive policies, community plans, and infrastructure projects.

As infrastructure funding or development financing for TOD-related projects has not been widely utilized in Houston yet, it is important to identify the main sources and mechanisms most commonly utilized. While there are several funding opportunities and financing mechanisms available to be utilized in the TOD context, the utilization of those mechanisms vary based on the unique characteristics of the specific TOD plan, site or neighborhood. On a basic level, the categories of funding tools include direct fees, debt, credit assistance, equity, value capture, and grants and other philanthropic sources. It is essential that METRO, local jurisdictions, other funding partners and developers understand the various funding tools available and their applicability, as well as explore innovative uses of the financing mechanisms.
Where Are We Now?

The history of development in Houston is much like that of cities across the US that started with pre-war streetcar suburbs and transitioned to auto-oriented suburban expansion development. These patterns have created barriers and challenges to overcome in order to facilitate and implement successful TOD in Houston. The recent light rail expansion, implementation of the New Bus Network, increasing redevelopment, policy changes and market trends all provide an opportunity to leverage the recent infrastructure investments made by METRO. Improved transit service can support changes in the communities that will promote increased safety, walkability, multi-modal trips and long-term vibrant neighborhoods.

For METRO, the role of the agency in TOD and joint development has been limited. In 2012, the agency identified that TOD and joint development are desired around its facilities and adopted TOD and Joint Development Goals and Strategies. METRO’s Station Area Planning effort can serve as the first step for the agency to move from a supportive role to an actor that actively participates in planning, pursuing and evolving TOD in Houston.

Additionally, the policy context at the City of Houston plays an important role. Oftentimes zoning is utilized to regulate and encourage the growth in an area to be conducive to or directly initiate TOD. As the City of Houston does not have zoning, ordinances instead are utilized for planning, and if designed in a supporting manner, can achieve similar results. Table 7-3 identifies primary challenges from policies and regulations, agency involvement and past developments that currently affect the feasibility and of TOD opportunities in Houston.

While Houston is not a city with traditional planning tools, such as zoning, a substantial amount of planning occurs from the neighborhood to regional levels. Plans and reports relating to mobility, transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, neighborhood revitalization, environmental quality, parks, sustainability, access management, healthcare, strategic and community plans, hazard mitigation, livable centers, goods movement, sub-regional plans, wetland conservation and many more have been developed in the Houston area to inform and create well-built, functional, livable communities. The structure, processes, and content vary in each of the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOD BENEFITS</th>
<th>Regulations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regulations affecting TOD are applied through different mechanisms and are not typically designed for flexibility (TOD is the hard path to follow, not the easy one)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard building setbacks prevent bringing structures close to the street in many cases</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building codes for mixed uses tend to require an overdesign of residential uses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking requirements influence the amount of space required for development and site design</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transportation Network</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amenities in the pedestrian realm are lacking in many areas, which discourages walking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discontinuous bicycle facilities make biking a challenge and frequently creates conflicts with auto traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing congestion leads to requests for more roadway capacity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financing for TOD is new and unfamiliar to many lending institutions in the Houston region and agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency incentives to support TOD are limited</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partnerships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A partnership or committee between public agencies and other stakeholders focused on TOD does not exist which makes coordination, identification of potential projects, leveraging resources and implementation more difficult</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
planning efforts, which can lead to inconsistent implementation and coordination. There is also an extensive regulatory environment that projects must comply with.

Most recently, the City of Houston has made great strides in refining its policies on how the City can encourage better urban growth that supports and encourages walkable areas and transit usage within its existing framework. Updates to the Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan, revisions to Chapters 26 and 42, the Complete Streets Executive Order as well as the completion of the Houston Urban Framework Report all signal a concerted effort to address some barriers to TOD through multiple mechanisms to encourage greater density, mixed use, flexibility for parking requirements, context sensitive street design, and encouraging transit usage. Additionally, Houston is currently developing its first General Plan that will tie together existing plans and goals, define successful outcomes and develop strategies to enhance neighborhoods and support growth and development.

The City of Houston’s improvements to the development and coordination of plans, policies and regulations to support and encourage TOD have only recently been implemented. Some recent developments are making use of the Transit Corridor Ordinance and other development policies that create more mixed use development and walkability, but, with some notable exceptions, their connection to transit is generally lacking. Additionally, many of the improvements to Chapter 42 and 26 ordinances that would encourage TOD are optional. Without stronger incentives or requirements, partnership and funding tools, TOD may be slow to be realized in Houston.

7.3.1 Existing Plans, Policies & Programs

Plans, policies and programs provide the coordination, vision, context and tools that converge to create TOD. There are many entities that play a role in one or all of these areas. Plans specifically pertain to the coordination and development of goals and recommendations that should be enacted in order to realize TOD. Plans can provide long or short-term recommendations and may refer to one specific site or corridor, or may look at a larger area. Plans also provide important information about existing conditions, barriers, best practices and potential solutions. Policies refer to the responsibilities of the agency as well as regulations or other top-level priorities that impact the manner in which development occurs. Programs are the specific tools that are utilized to fund, incentivize and implement projects. The following Tables 7-4 through 7-6 identify the most relevant Plans, Policies, and Programs driven by various public entities that impact TOD implementation.
### Table 7-4: TOD Relevant Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENCY</th>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>INFORMATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>Urban Corridor Planning Report &amp; ULI Assessment</td>
<td>Establishes several recommendations and a strategy to implement TOD - ULI provides analysis of development impacts and consequences of the Urban Corridors Planning Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>Urban Houston Framework</td>
<td>Guide to integrate land use and transportation planning by coordinating land development standards with new transit investments, and by providing affordable housing in dense areas around new transit lines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan</td>
<td>Identifies roadway classification and future needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>General Plan</td>
<td>Presents outcomes and strategies for growth and development conducive to TOD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-GAC</td>
<td>Our Great Region 2040</td>
<td>Identifies strategies that are relevant to mixed-use, multimodal development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-GAC</td>
<td>Livable Centers Program</td>
<td>Smaller area plans that develop projects to create a multimodal environment and emphasize mixed use development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-GAC</td>
<td>Regional Transportation Plan</td>
<td>Identifies regional priorities for transportation investments and regional performance measures in support of TOD investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston / H-GAC</td>
<td>Mobility plans</td>
<td>Identifies projects that promote better mobility, and to consider and develop a multi modal classification for streets within the study areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METRO</td>
<td>Bike &amp; Ride Access &amp; Implementation Plan</td>
<td>Identifies multimodal connectivity and programs to support increased access to transit for bicyclists and pedestrians</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 7-5: TOD Relevant Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENCY</th>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>INFORMATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>METRO</td>
<td>Transit Oriented Development Goals &amp; Strategies</td>
<td>Identifies elements of TOD projects supported by METRO and strategies to enhance TOD viability around METRO services. Includes Joint Development Guidelines, Policies and Procedures that guide marketing, solicitation, and negotiation, as well as define developer and METRO responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>Ch. 42 (151 - 159; 163)</td>
<td>Identifies minimum setback lines and preservation of existing building setbacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>Ch. 42 Transit Corridor Development (Article IV)</td>
<td>Optional regulations to enhanced development options adjacent to designated Transit Corridor Streets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>Ch. 42 Article III - Div 4</td>
<td>Planning Standards - minimum lot size /building line ordinance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>Parking Regulations (Sec. 26-500, 498, 503)</td>
<td>Minimum parking spaces, shared parking requirements and allowances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>Building Codes</td>
<td>Identifies uses and required standards/regulations for development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>Complete Streets Policy</td>
<td>Improves pedestrian and bicycle amenities that can facilitate safer access, feasibility of transit and enhance TOD opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Jurisdictions</td>
<td>Zoning Regulations</td>
<td>Zoning regulations (or ordinances) that reduce parking, encourage mixed uses and higher densities can encourage (or hinder if not appropriate) TOD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PUBLIC POLICY FRAMEWORK
### Table 7-6: TOD Relevant Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENCY</th>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>INFORMATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>METRO</td>
<td>Capital Improvement Program</td>
<td>Use to develop better transit stations, access improvements and amenities that support TOD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METRO</td>
<td>FTA-Assisted Joint Development</td>
<td>Allows grant funding through planning and capital assistance programs and allows property previously acquired to be used for JD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METRO/City of Houston</td>
<td>Transportation Infrastructure Financing &amp; Innovation Act (TIFIA)</td>
<td>Financing program through credit assistance, could be used to aid in developing transportation infrastructure and potentially affordable housing inclusions in overall TOD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>PWE Infrastructure Design Manual</td>
<td>Influences the pedestrian and bicycle environment and roadway design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>HOPE Program</td>
<td>Aids homeownership in revitalization zones - which could aid affordable housing development within TOD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>Land Assemblage Redevelopment Authority</td>
<td>Acquisition, assemblage, management, marketing, development &amp; disposition of properties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>Ch. 380 Agreements</td>
<td>Economic and other incentives for new, pedestrian friendly multifamily residential mixed use development (Ex: Downtown Living Initiative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>Parking Benefit Districts</td>
<td>Can be used to allow parking revenues to be used for public amenities, including those that would encourage transit usage and TOD feasibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>Multifamily housing incentives</td>
<td>Inclusion of affordable housing - programs include low interest loans, grants and tax incentives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>ReBuild Houston</td>
<td>Pay-as-you-go funding mechanism to maintain and plan upgrades to infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>Municipal Management Districts (MMD)</td>
<td>To finance facilities, infrastructure and services supplemental to the City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Houston</td>
<td>Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ)</td>
<td>Aid in financing redevelopment and encouraging development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-GAC</td>
<td>Surface Transportation Program (STP) Funds</td>
<td>Can flex funding to transit projects; eligibility includes streetscape improvements, sidewalks, trails, new connectivity for redeveloped TOD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGENCY</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>INFORMATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-GAC</td>
<td>Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) Funds</td>
<td>Projects reducing travel demand including TOD could qualify; can flex funding to transit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDHCA</td>
<td>Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC)</td>
<td>LIHTC provides incentives for the development or rehabilitation of affordable rental housing based on population. Largest federal subsidy for affordable housing, helping one-sixth of all multifamily housing nationwide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-GAC / TxDOT</td>
<td>Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Funds</td>
<td>Includes transit accessibility &amp; community improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Jurisdictions</td>
<td>Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)</td>
<td>Community development financing mechanism, encourages developing viable communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Jurisdictions</td>
<td>Capital Improvement Program</td>
<td>Used to develop pedestrian and bicycle access as well as utilities necessary for TOD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LISC</td>
<td>Go-Neighborhoods</td>
<td>Revitalization initiative that addresses multiple aspects of creating a sustainable community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LISC</td>
<td>Loans &amp; Real Estate Financing</td>
<td>Provides pre-development, acquisition, construction, mini-permanent, and bridge loans to Community Development Corporations (CDCs), nonprofit real estate developers and other partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avenue CDC</td>
<td>Community Developer</td>
<td>Develops affordable homes for purchase, rental housing, preservation of historic structures, and uses green building techniques to strengthen communities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While the Plans, Policies, and Programs outlined in the tables above identify strategies to support TOD implementation, outdated design guidelines and regulatory barriers persist which limit comprehensive and coordinated development of TOD over a wider area. As noted during the interviews with developers and the market assessments, many of the factors that would typically be a part of a TOD project required variances or carried elevated financial risks and regulatory burdens for the developer. Some of these challenges discussed briefly below should be addressed through multi-agency coordination in order to most effectively support the implementation of TOD projects.

- **METRO’s Transit Oriented Development Goals and Strategies document could identify specific action-oriented strategies to more clearly direct staff activities.** By clarifying METRO’s position and priorities, developers and partners such as management districts and community stakeholders could better understand the opportunities and the role METRO can play in TOD projects.

- **METRO will need to develop access management plans for rail stations, park & rides, and transit centers which integrate transit facility entrance/egress areas into the adjacent sidewalk and bike lane network.** Currently, transit facilities have entrance/egress areas which may force pedestrian to walk in the opposite direction from activity centers and sites for potential TOD.

- **METRO should also craft an internal policy describing which stations should have park & ride access and leverage the results of such an analysis to coordinate with the city and developers on shared parking opportunities and parking benefit districts.** Revenue generated within the parking benefit districts could be leveraged to fund additional infrastructure improvements in the surrounding station area.

- **The City of Houston’s Chapter 42 could better address the unique elements and regulatory needs of TOD.** Elements that can positively impact TOD are included in the Subdivision Ordinance, but the ordinance does not recognize TOD as its own development typology that has a variety of more specialized regulatory needs and options that are not currently or most adequately covered in the existing ordinance. Some cities have recognized this and set up a specific review process for projects that meet certain TOD standards allowing better coordination and expedited reviews as an incentive to developers.

- **The Transit Corridor Ordinance has a positive influence on the ability to implement TOD projects, but the current level of incentives and the opt-in nature of the program has resulted in relatively few developments utilizing the regulatory structure set forth in the Ordinance.** Additional incentives, such as an expedited review process, could provide additional encouragement that is currently lacking for developers.

- **Parking requirements can be a significant impediment to TOD projects due to the high costs to the developer and the impact that parking requirements can have on site layouts and access requirements.** Section 26 of the Code of Ordinances provides some options for reduced parking requirements, but these options require several additional steps before being implemented. Often they require a more regional approach that extends beyond the scope of a particular project. Additional accommodation in Section 26 that specifically addresses projects that meet a TOD standard would further allow developers to make the best use of available development space without the cost and constraints of the existing parking requirements, while also not burdening adjacent parking demand as more people can utilize transit for their trips.

- **Building codes are currently set to conform to the most restrictive code for the entire structure.** This has negative impacts when attempting to build a mix of uses within a single development and results in higher build out costs. For example a residential portion of a TOD would be subject to the more rigorous code requirement if there were a restaurant included in the project. Flexibility within the building code would make mixed use projects more feasible for developers. For example, form based codes are widely utilized in multiple cities with successful TOD. In the Dallas-Fort Worth region, twelve municipalities have enacted form-based codes to facilitate TOD projects. The City of Dallas has developed Form Districts (Chapter 51A, Article 13) that focus on building form and development standards that facilitate mixed use development by
identifying separate requirements for the various uses that can be combined in one building.

Addressing these and other challenges will require multiple partners in both the public and private sectors. The following section outlines steps that METRO and others can take to support the development of more TOD projects that create benefits for all the stakeholders involved.

7.4 How Can We Capture The Opportunity?

The timing of this report is opportune for METRO and the Houston area. With the recent extension of the METRORail Red Line, the completion of the Purple (Southeast) and Green (East End) light rail lines, and implementation of the New Bus Network, the opportunities for TOD in Houston are growing and are ripe for implementation. In order to move TOD opportunities toward realization, METRO, local agencies, funding partners, and developers have various capabilities and responsibilities that need to be acted upon.

The recommendations presented here (Tables 7-7 through 7-10 below) identify actions that METRO could utilize with various stakeholders that would aid in the implementation and development of TOD. These recommendations have a broad range, from better education and awareness of opportunities, to partnering in order to develop or enhance METRO property. The following strategies encourage METRO to play an active role in and influence transit supportive and transit oriented development by working directly with local jurisdictions, developers, property managers and other stakeholders who can benefit from TOD design and development. These strategies have been grouped into four overarching recommendations for METRO: encouraging development that supports increased transit ridership, developing partnerships and actively coordinating with stakeholders, supporting multimodal access to the transit network, and leveraging METRO infrastructure and investments. The recommendations are then further broken down into three categories of strategies: evaluate, coordinate, and educate. “Evaluate” recommendations refer largely to analysis that supports next steps for METRO; “Coordinate” recommendations state opportunities to work with partners and internal departments to move TOD forward; and “Educate” recommendations refer to marketing and getting the word out about opportunities.
### Table 7-7: Recommendations to Encourage TOD

#### RECOMMENDATION 1: Encourage development that supports increased transit ridership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Implementation Action</th>
<th>Key Partner(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>• Revise existing TOD Goals and Strategies to include action driven new strategies for METRO Board approval to authorize staff to better pursue TOD opportunities.</td>
<td>Internal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identify and communicate to key partners and stakeholders the needs surrounding transit facilities for the inclusion of mixed-income or affordable housing opportunities utilizing findings from the station area market assessments.</td>
<td>Local Jurisdictions, Developers, Housing Authority, CDCs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate</td>
<td>• Coordinate multi-departmental resources to focus on increased level of development near METRO services (ex: METRO’s Real Estate or Service Planning departments could inform and help focus marketing or planning efforts).</td>
<td>Internal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Evaluate and coordinate parking requirement updates in Chapter 26 with the City of Houston to encourage greater use of land and TOD development opportunities (ex: create parking benefit districts around rail stations).</td>
<td>City of Houston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Coordinate with the City of Houston and developers to evaluate and strengthen Chapter 42 of the City’s Land Development Ordinances to further encourage development that encourages transit supportive corridors inclusive of high-frequency bus service, greater density, and mixed-use development (ex: expedited review process, or separate review process, for TOD projects).</td>
<td>City of Houston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Coordinate with the City of Houston on the development of the Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan (MTFP) to identify priority transit corridors and opportunities for right-of-way preservation (ex: future BRT routes, high frequency corridors).</td>
<td>City of Houston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate</td>
<td>• Promote TOD opportunities through education, coordination and marketing to and with stakeholders.</td>
<td>Management Districts, Local Jurisdictions Developers, Realtors, Businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop interactive maps and tools to promote better location choices. Tools could include interactive maps, such as &quot;Where should I live so I can get many places in 30 minutes via transit?&quot; or &quot;Where should I locate my business so that my employees have good transit access?&quot;</td>
<td>Management Districts, Local Jurisdictions Developers, Realtors, Businesses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 7-8: Recommendations to Support Multi-modal Access

**RECOMMENDATION 2: Support multi-modal access to the transit network**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Implementation Action</th>
<th>Key Partner(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>▪ Develop guidelines &amp; programs to facilitate greater integration of METRO facilities and services within neighborhoods (ex: improved access to facilities by improving pedestrian access and implementing recommendations from METRO's Bike &amp; Ride Access and Implementation Plan).&lt;br&gt;▪ Optimize parking at METRO facilities by re-evaluating and prioritizing proximity to activity centers, local feeder bus service, and multi-modal connectivity.&lt;br&gt;▪ Manage the use and construction of METRO parking facilities to balance vehicle access with opportunity for TOD to maximize ridership and minimize the need for single-occupancy vehicle trips in the TOD area.</td>
<td>Internal, City of Houston, Internal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate</td>
<td>▪ Near-term: Support grant applications that promote TOD enhancing access for TIP (Transportation Improvement Program), federal discretionary, or other funding&lt;br&gt;▪ Long-term: Work with H-GAC to align project evaluation and funding levels for the TIP to support TOD projects&lt;br&gt;▪ Support prioritization of capital projects that would improve multimodal access to key transit nodes (ex: grants or City of Houston ReBuild Houston funding).</td>
<td>Internal, H-GAC, Local Jurisdictions, Local Jurisdictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate</td>
<td>▪ Communicate to developers and other stakeholders transit services to support transit friendly location decisions.&lt;br&gt;▪ Promote and prioritize pedestrian and bicycling connections and amenities at key transit nodes.</td>
<td>Developers, Local Jurisdictions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 7-9: Recommendations to Leverage Investments

#### RECOMMENDATION 3: Leverage METRO infrastructure and investments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Implementation Action</th>
<th>Key Partner(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Evaluate | - Develop methodology to evaluate TOD potential of existing/potential property.  
- Strategically plan for opportunities for land banking, corridor preservation and joint development or current facilities as well as future corridors defined through a long-range planning effort.  
- Utilize surface parking as a strategic land bank for potential TOD opportunities, and utilize shared and joint-use parking when available and feasible to reduce costs to build and maintain parking facilities.  
- Identify capital projects that can be funded or developed from land sales or swaps.  
- Allow for and potentially add warrants to the disposition of surplus property for TOD purposes and maximum asset utilization.  
- Utilize joint development revenues to support additional JD or TOD projects, programs and infrastructure. | Internal  
Developers Internal  
Internal  
Developers Internal  
Developers  
Internal |
| Coordinate | - Utilize joint development as a means to maintain control of and receive long-term revenue from METRO assets.  
- Increase the asset utilization of METRO–owned property through public-private or public-public development agreements that support TOD principles. | Developers  
Developers Local Jurisdictions |
| Educate | - Educate developers and stakeholders on joint development opportunities.  
- Market and solicit proposals for joint development opportunities. | Developers  
Developers |
## Table 7-10: Recommended Stakeholder Partnerships

**RECOMMENDATION 4: Develop partnerships and actively coordinate with stakeholders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Implementation Action</th>
<th>Key Partner(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Evaluate | - Work with local governments to identify additional incentives for TOD (e.g., review Transit Corridor Ordinance to see if it is delivering desired outcomes, and if not, how to help).  
- Develop and disseminate information as to how TOD relates to planning and design of transit projects, and METRO’s project development process.  
- Establish a framework for developing partnerships with private developers on JD projects where METRO property would be utilized.  
- Explore value capture opportunities by partnering with management districts and TIRZs.                                                                                             | Local jurisdictions           |
| Coordinate | - Work with developers and property managers to designate buildings as “transit friendly” based on a set of established criteria.  
- Provide METRO staff expertise, data and resources to external agencies and stakeholders to assist in ongoing development efforts around METRORail stations.  
- Support TOD efforts by the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) through the Livable Centers program and other initiatives to develop projects that link transit services with future growth in the region and are consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan.  
- Work with advocacy groups and social service providers to promote TOD education and best practices.  
- Work with stakeholders (such as HUD, City of Houston Housing Authority, the Hospital District, and CDCs) in the development of transit supportive, mixed-use development that include affordable housing opportunities.  
- Work with partners to identify and promote funding tools to finance TOD infrastructure.  
- Work with stakeholders to identify and explore potential public-private or public-public partnerships, as well as pilot projects. | Developers, Property Managers Various, H-GAC, Advocacy groups, Social service, Housing Authorities, CDCs, Local Jurisdiction H-GAC, Various |
| Educate | - Actively promote the transit network to major real estate groups such as the Urban Land Institute, National Association of Realtors, and CREW Network.  
- Support, encourage, and potentially convene a multi-stakeholder committee that includes METRO, City of Houston departments, H-GAC and other stakeholders that focuses on TOD issues, funding and development opportunities.                                                                                         | Real Estate Community, Various |
7.5 Next Steps
The recommendations and strategies identified provide an opportunity for METRO to move beyond the information and analyses developed during the TOD study into actions that can help progress development opportunities in the station areas. METRO will play an active role in influencing transit supportive development by working directly with local jurisdictions, developers, property managers and other stakeholders who can benefit from TOD design and development.

Short and long term recommendations and strategies have been identified however, there are a series of activities that were introduced in the Study Phase of the TOD Project that must be undertaken in the immediate future as next steps to sustain the momentum gained from the study and keep the TOD partners engaged. The immediate next steps are:

1. Continue engagement with the Special Districts using the TOD Marketing Brochure and the framework reports - The deliverables of the study include a framework report as well as a marketing brochure. Both may be used to elicit development interest within the station areas, and to educate the community and other stakeholders on TOD potential in the station area. This would also give METRO the opportunity to continue the dialogue that was initiated with management districts and stakeholders as a part of the study.

2. Coordinate with the City of Houston (Planning, Public Works & Engineering and Economic Development Department), participating agencies and partners to set up the TOD Task Force. During the course of the study, METRO had coordinated with the City of Houston’s Planning Department and PWE (Public Works and Engineering) to discuss the potential role of multi-agency TOD working group. A group such as this would be instrumental in identifying policy and institutional barriers to TOD implementation and in exploring appropriate solutions.

3. Develop a TOD Pilot Project in coordination with the City of Houston’s Economic Development Department - METRO and the City of Houston would coordinate in identifying METRORail stations as a pilot location and developing a framework to implement a pilot study.

4. Coordinate with HISD and the universities to identify TOD opportunities – As part of METRO’s stakeholder engagement during the TOD study, the project will continue dialogue with HISD and the University of Houston to coordinate efforts with their respective master planning efforts.

5. Continue coordinating with the Housing Authority, LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation), the City of Houston’s Housing department and other stakeholders to identify barriers and potential solutions for more workforce housing close to transit.

Finally, long-term analysis of transit oriented development should entail continual monitoring characteristics such as population, employment, housing tenure, racial and ethnic composition, median household income, housing costs, in-migration, journey-to-work and auto-ownership, among others. Working together with the tools identified in this document, METRO and other TOD stakeholders can make a lasting impact in the community, creating more sustainable communities with walkability, economic development, transit usage, and healthier neighborhoods.