

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

Seattle Design Commission

December 7, 2023



A special purpose transit agency...



...supporting transit-oriented communities



What is Transit-Oriented Development?

Higher densities and compact form

Near high-capacity transit

Reduced automobile prominence & parking

Pedestrian and cyclist friendly

Has or is near multiple uses to meet daily needs

Primary agency goals for TOD program



**Create
TOD**



**Build affordable
housing**

Value Capture



**Generate
Revenue**



**Reduce
Project Costs**



**Increase
Ridership**



**Serve
Passengers**

Where are TOD opportunities?

OPERATIONS FOOTPRINT

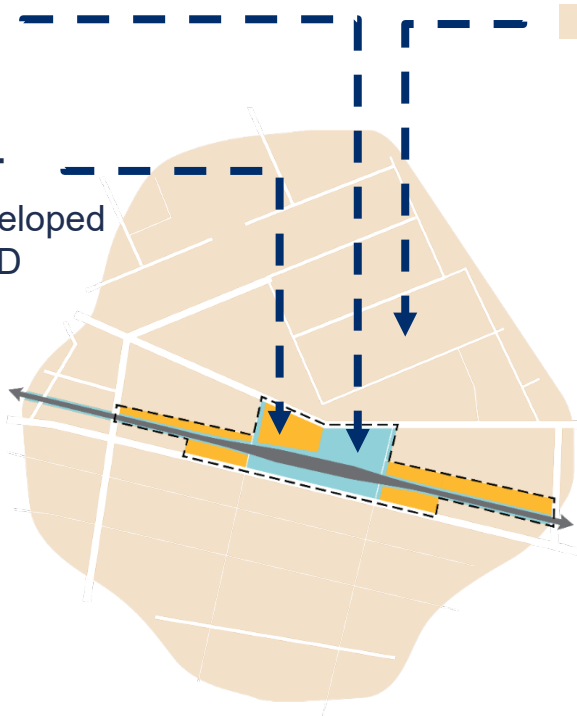
Permanent transit uses and potential joint development

CONSTRUCTION FOOTPRINT

Construction staging may be redeveloped after transit purpose as Agency TOD

COMMUNITY TOD

Area within comfortable walking distance to station (10-15 minutes)



Agency TOD Example:
Artspace Mount Baker Lofts

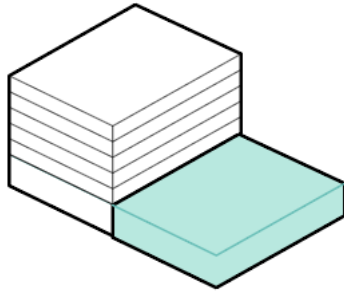


Photo: Artspace

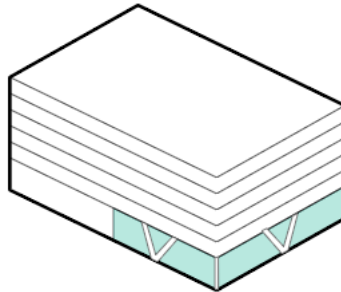
Community TOD Example:
Mercy Housing Gardner House



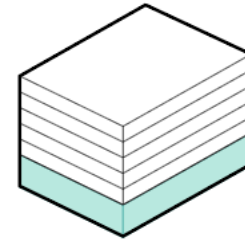
Types of Agency TOD projects



Adjacent



Air Rights



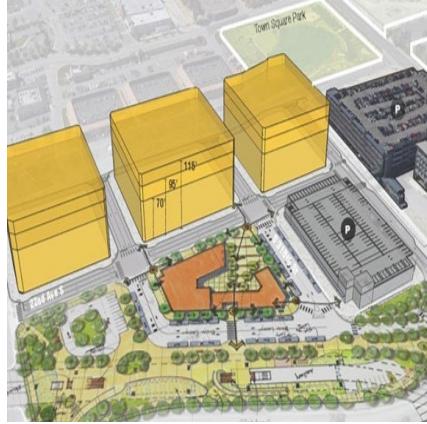
Integrated



Major phases of TOD at Sound Transit



**Station
Planning**



**Explore
Opportunities**

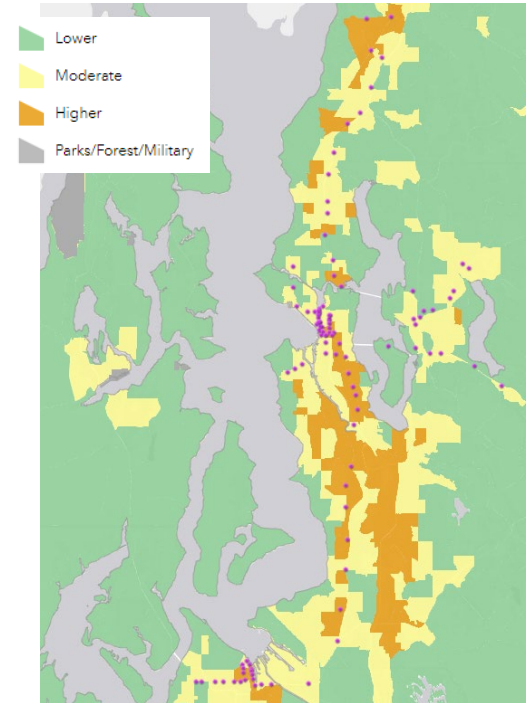


**TOD
Implementation**

Higher displacement risk near stations



Home prices in Seattle increased 25% more near light rail stations between 2012-2016

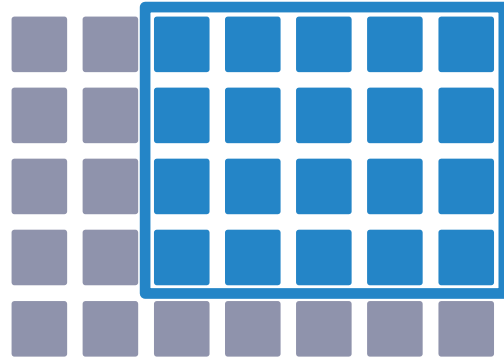


Displacement risk near current & future rail transit stations (PSRC)

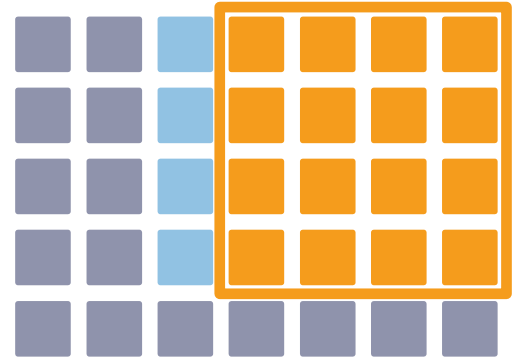
Statute direction on surplus property



All applicable surplus property



Those determined as suitable for housing

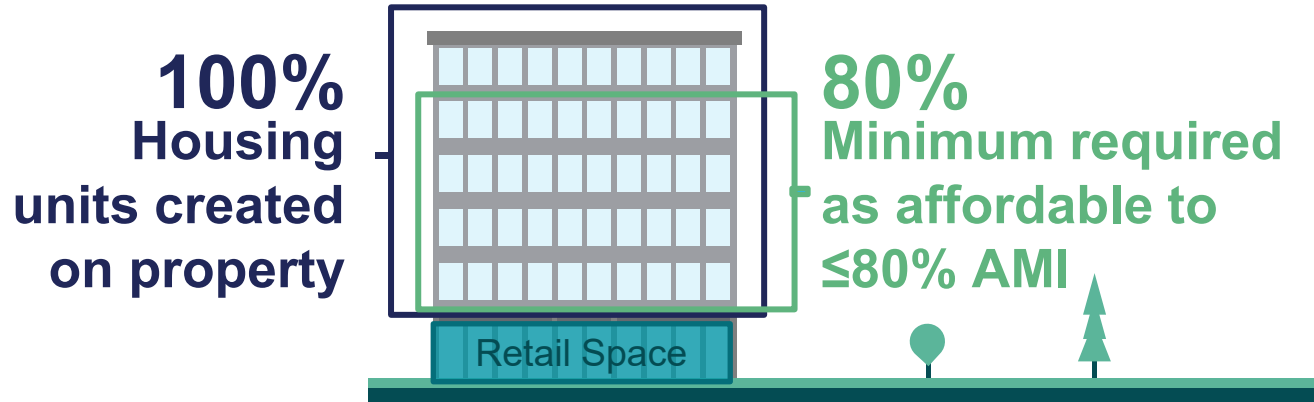


At least 80% of those suitable for housing must be offered to qualified entities for affordable housing

Conceptual depiction

Statute direction on surplus property

- If a qualified entity receives surplus property through the first offer, then a minimum of 80% of the housing units constructed on that property must be dedicated to affordable housing



Statute direction on surplus property

80

**≥80% of property
suitable for housing
must be first offered
for affordable housing
creation**

80

**≥80% of created units
must be affordable**

80

**Units must serve
those earning ≤80% of
area median income**

Compliance with RCW 81.112.350

96%

≥80%
REQUIRED

% of property suitable for housing offered to Qualified Entities (QE)

100%

≥80%
REQUIRED

% of units on property transferred to QEs for affordable housing serving households at or below 80% AMI

TOD program highlights



3,100

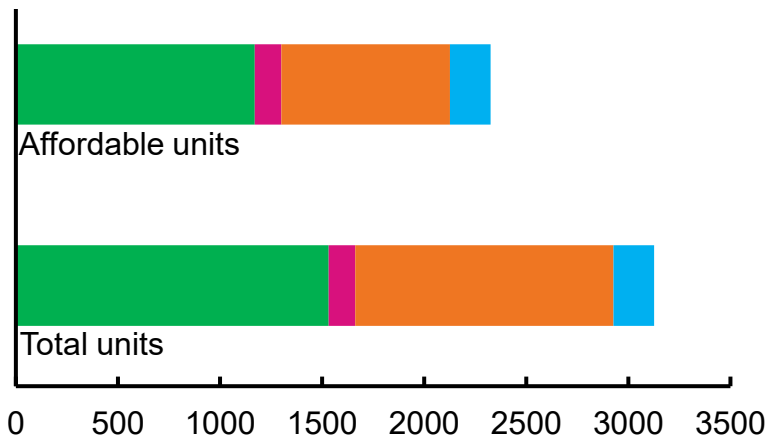
Homes built or in process



\$1.7 BILLION

Total public and private investment in projects built or in process

Forecasted housing units on Sound Transit property – affordable and total*



Legend:
Built (Green) Awarded (Orange)
Under Construction (Pink) Negotiating (Blue)

TOD program highlights (cont.)



**11 projects
built**

- Federal Way Downtown Station
- Mount Baker Station
- Othello Station
- Capitol Hill Station
- Roosevelt Station
- First Hill



**2 projects under
construction**

- Angle Lake Station
- U District Station



**14 projects in
design***

- Angle Lake Station
- Capitol Hill Station
- Columbia City Station
- Mount Baker Station
- Othello Station
- Overlake Village Station
- Spring District Station



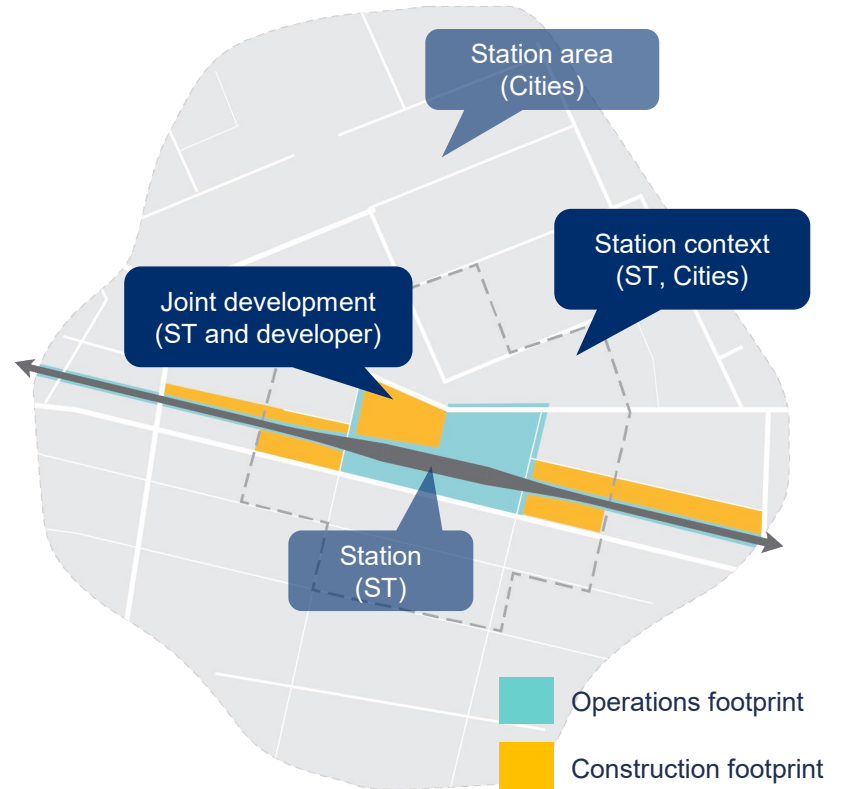
**1 project in
negotiations**

- Kent Des Moines Station

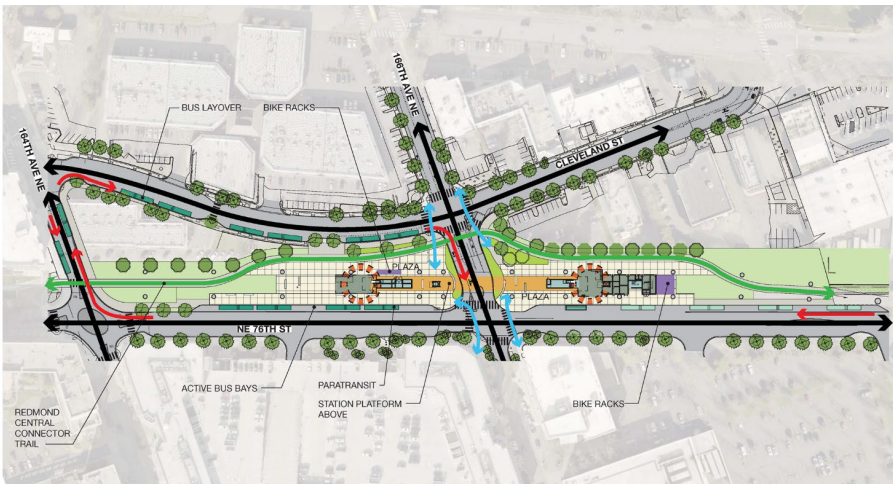
***Planning and designing transit
to support TOD***

Focusing on the Correct Scale

- 1-3 blocks surrounding the station will see the most direct physical change from station construction and operations
- Define the project footprint early, and understand what is possible within that footprint for joint development and other uses
- Seek concurrences and support of planning and design objectives



Creating station context frameworks



- Presents a concept for urban design of station and immediate environs
- Shows how patterns of access, circulation, public space are resolved, and indicates opportunities for adjacent or joint development
- Highlights issues for community to weigh, along with potential refinements to carry into final design

Planning for development



- Evaluating layouts for future development
- Avoiding undevelopable remnants
- Building supportive infrastructure
- Minimizing future site encumbrances
- Addressing zoning and title issues
- Engaging cities and communities

Major factors for integrated joint development opportunities



Design and delivery of transit facilities



Upfront investment requirements



Prioritization of public benefits

Major factors for integrated joint development opportunities (cont.)



Local infrastructure resources



TOD-supportive zoning

Zoning and joint development

Exhibit 1 – Maximum Footprint

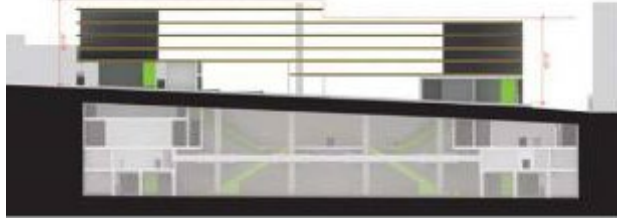
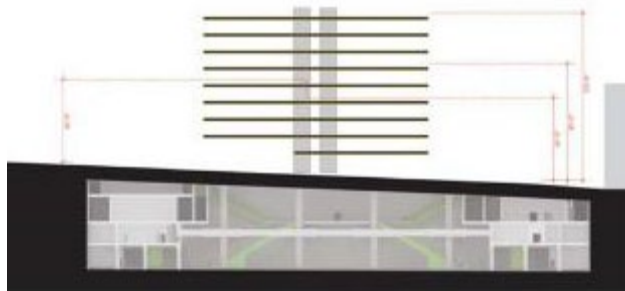


Exhibit 3 – Concentrated Maximum Height



- Station design schedule may not be aligned with joint development schedule
- Station design often needs to assume joint development design/program
- Zoning is often updated closer to station opening, which is often after station design

What zoning should be assumed for a representative joint development during station design?

***Planning and implementing
TOD projects themselves***

The TOD project planning phases



Exploration



Pre-development



Construction



Complete

Typical TOD project planning process

Engage community on high level goals & needs

Engage community on more specific goals

Engage developers & CBOs on strategy

Identify TOD site and site constraints

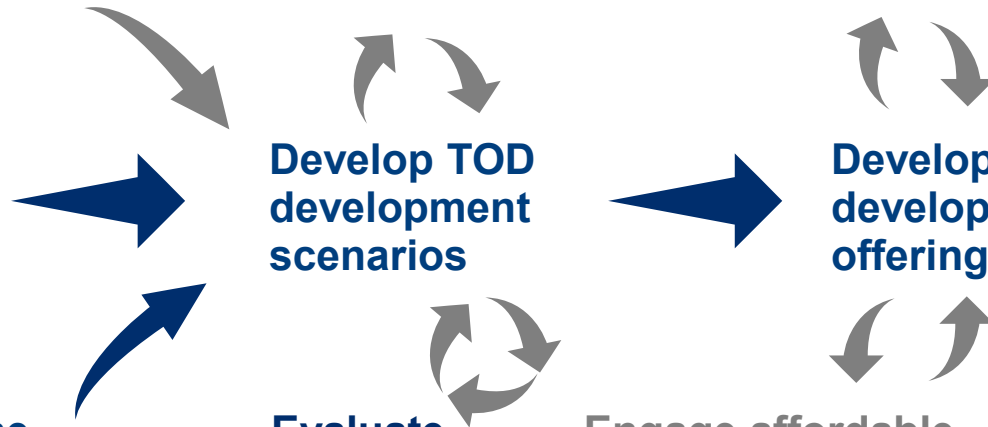
Develop TOD development scenarios

Develop development offering strategy

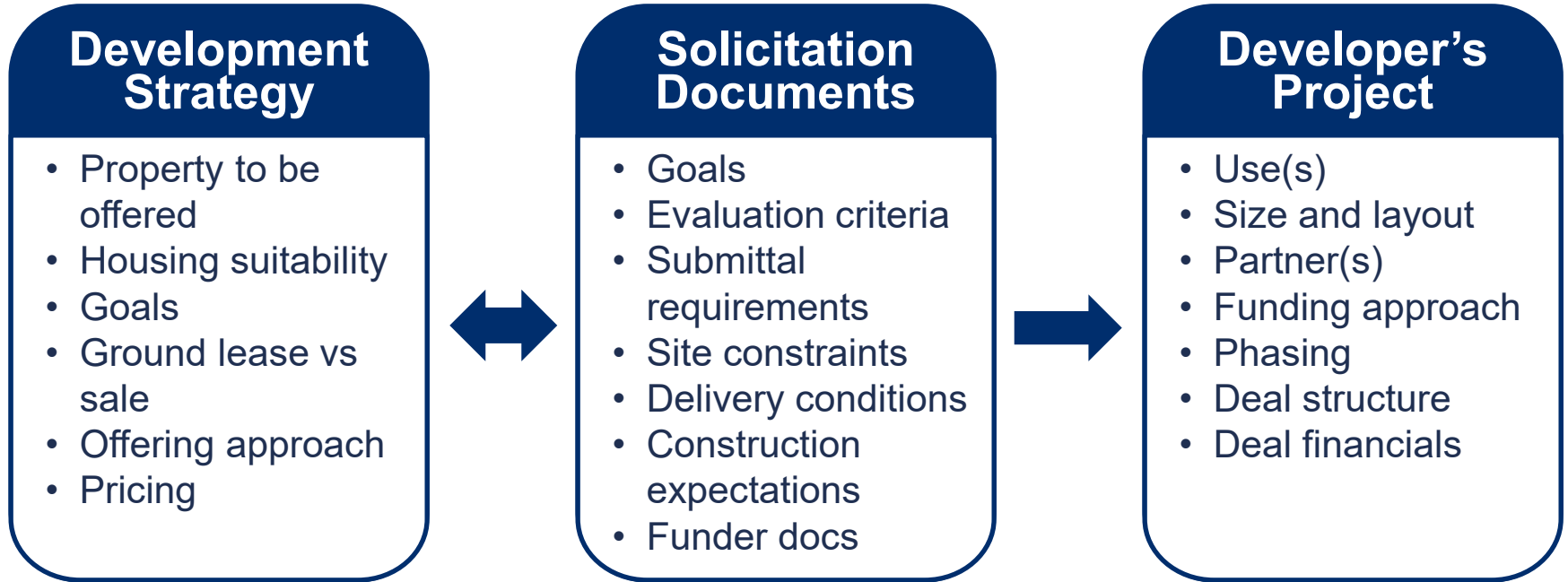
Conduct baseline market analysis

Evaluate financial feasibility

Engage affordable housing funders & city



Going from strategy to a project



Sound Transit partners with others to maximize affordable housing outcomes

Partnering with:

- Developers and CBOs
- Local affordable housing funding – King County, A Regional Coalition for Housing, Seattle Office of Housing
- Washington State Housing Finance Commission \$200 million bond partnership
- Amazon Housing Equity Fund \$100 million partnership



Pride Place in Capitol Hill is the result of a public-public property exchange and a partnership between Community Roots Housing & GenPride

Project examples

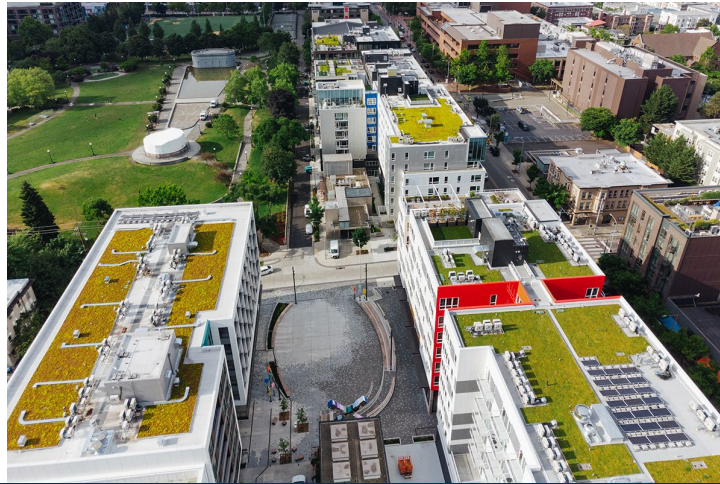


 **428**

Total homes

 **177**

Affordable homes

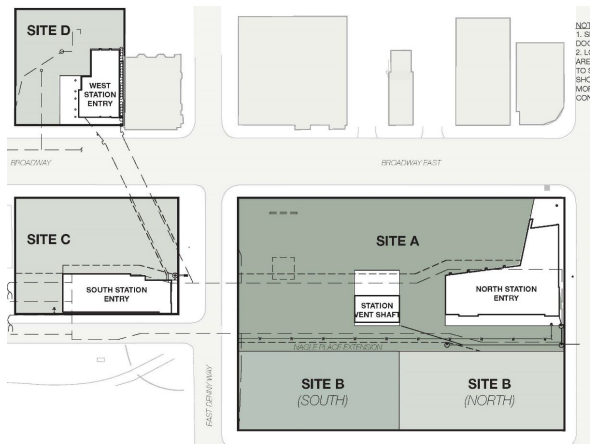


EDLEN & CO.

EDLEN KRAGE SHERMAN
IMPACT REAL ESTATE



COMMUNITY ROOTS
HOUSING



Design Notes:

- Station not designed to carry weight of TOD
- Site C spans over pedestrian tunnel
- TOD plaza built on top of station
- Restrictions on soil loading to protect station
- Station tiebacks on property
- Design restrictions to limit headhouse access
- Recent community critique that project wasn't taller





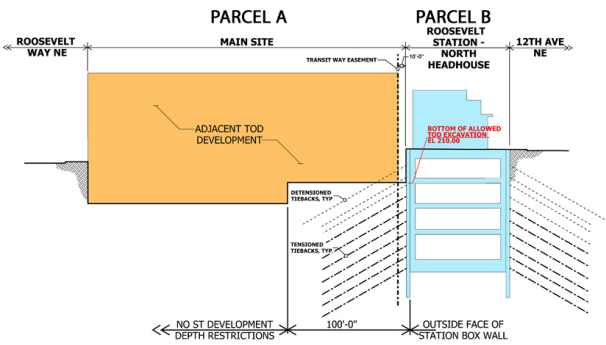
 **254**
Affordable homes



BELLWETHER
HOUSING

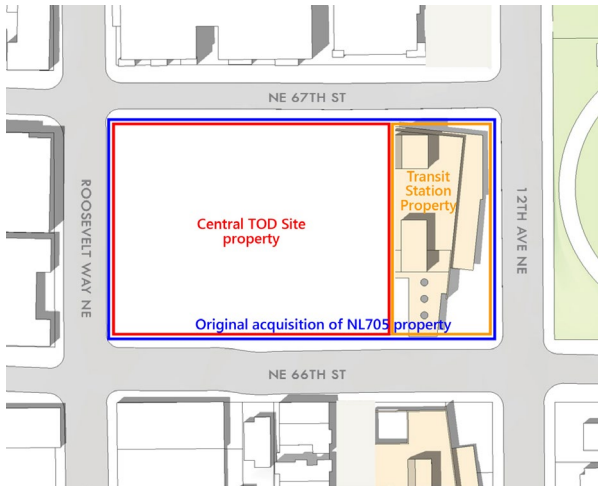


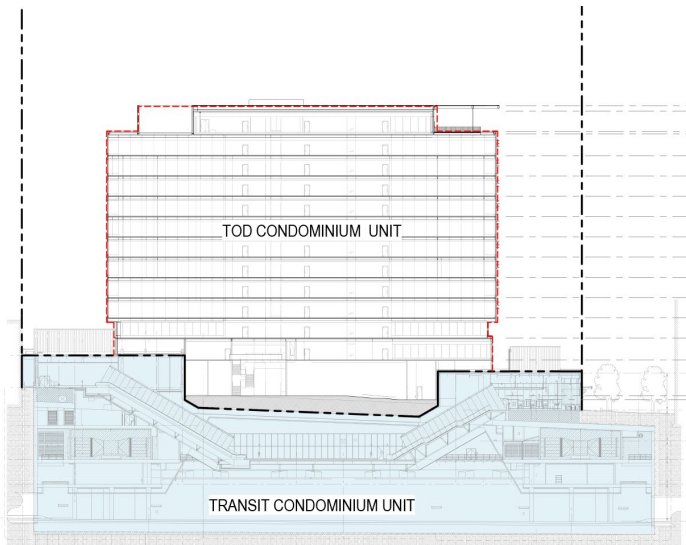
mercy
HOUSING



Design Notes:

- Station not designed to carry weight of TOD
- Restrictions on soil loading to protect station
- Station tiebacks on property
- Design restrictions to limit headhouse access
- No good street for TOD trash, loading, parking access
- City departments asked developer late in permitting process to change design to accommodate new thinking on potential street use changes on NE 67th Street





② TOD/TRANSIT CONDOMINIUM UNIT DEMISING SECTION (N-S)
1/32" = 1'-0"

260k
SQ FT office

W
UNIVERSITY of
WASHINGTON

LINCOLN
PROPERTY
COMPANY



 **365**
Affordable homes



BELLWETHER
HOUSING

Plymouth
Housing



 **118**
Affordable homes




COMMUNITY ROOTS
HOUSING


GenPride

Lessons learned

Acting with intention for development

- “T” in “TOD” was limiting frame
- Transit design and infrastructure can support or impair redevelopment
- Leasing construction staging may not realize development sooner and is financially costly



Property assemblage by public sector is an underutilized tool

- Sound Transit can only buy for transit purpose, not for TOD
- Small remnant surplus properties are sometimes unavoidable
- Other public agencies not organized to acquire adjacent property to “round out” remnant
- Proactive vacation of public property is limited



Community and jurisdictional engagement can take time

- “Move at the speed of trust”
- Be transparent on process and where impact is most likely
- Tease out the policy or project choices in play
- Be efficient with everyone’s time, as most don’t want long processes
- Be intentional and inclusive; adjust approaches; resource effort



Time and resource constraints

- Create more housing sooner vs longer process to create an even better project
- Set expectation that TOD projects next to or on top of transit infrastructure takes time to plan and coordinate design/construction
- Expand Sound Transit and local jurisdiction staff capacity, as it limits what gets worked on



Prioritize goals and provide development partners with flexibility

- Better prioritize goals to reduce “guessing” by proposers
- Reduce time and expense of preparing proposals
- Provide projects flexibility to innovate or reform systems, while having clear minimum expectations



Avoiding “remnant” property

- Limitations on what property can be bought (ie. can’t buy for TOD) may result in undevelopable remnants
- Consider “exit strategy” for portions of property not used by the transit facilities
- Encourage local jurisdictions to acquire adjacent property to allow for consolidation of properties



Thank you.



 [soundtransit.org](https://www.soundtransit.org)

