



Portland Journal:

Transit investments can bring great benefits, but require smart planning

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About Portland

Few cities in the U.S. rival the transit commitment of Portland, Oregon. Since opening its first light rail line in 1986, Portland has become an instructive model of transit oriented development (TOD). Portland locals are now well accustomed to sharing the whole story of their transit commitment, and are eager to assist visitors in learning from both their successes and their challenges.

To be sure, there were neighborhoods and communities in the Portland area that opposed LRT in the 1980s and 90s, but now, according to Fred Hanson, general manager of Tri-Met, the dominant question is “When do we get our LRT too?” As Portland presents itself to the world, marketing to tourists, the two dominant icons are Mount Hood – and the streetcar. Now, no one can imagine Portland without a robust transit system.



The light rail in downtown Portland is now a fixture of the City.

Development Successes and Failures

TOD is a key part of Portland’s growth strategy. In the Portland region, TOD is often judged by Orenco Station, the project considered to be the “gold standard” for development around transit. Orenco Station, built on former farmland, is a very walkable place with urban density.



Orenco Station, the “Gold Standard” of transit oriented development.

Not all transit stations meet this standard. “A few German firms located new offices in Washington County near transit stations but were surprised to find their offices didn’t function as they anticipated because of the suburban design,” Hanson notes. “The companies had large campuses but were surrounded by a sea of parking. Now the companies run shuttles between the LRT station and the front door because of this failure of design.” As many places with transit have evolved over time, Portland has learned from projects that work well -- and others that are less than ideal.

About the Trains

Portland has two types of rail transit, streetcars and light rail, which serve different purposes. Streetcars act as a small urban circulator that runs at a top speed of 38 mph. Light rail has larger trains with greater capacity which travel longer distances at higher speeds up to 55 mph.

The light rail in Portland is engineered with a lighter touch than in the Twin Cities. More ballasted track is used on the Hiawatha line, whereas the light rail in Portland has embedded track in most urban areas. The Hiawatha line uses many bells and whistles to alert people to oncoming trains. In contrast, the Portland light rail does not use any bells, whistles or other noise downtown, yet very few accidents have occurred.



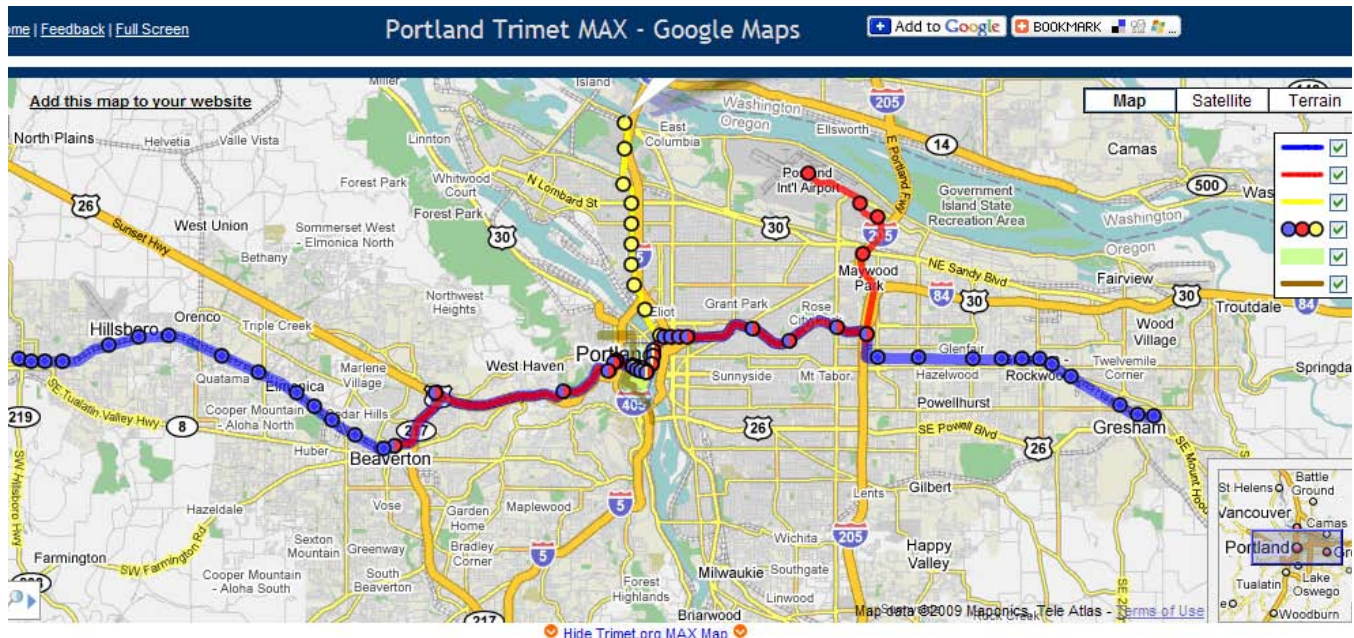
Light rail transit, above and streetcar transit, below.



Transit Financing

Oregon Representatives Blumenauer and DeFazio have been very supportive in securing federal funding. Tri-Met has full funding for the next line to be built, the Green Line to Milwaukie, which has a total cost of over \$1 billion. Portland has always received at least 60 percent federal funding, yet finding the local matching funds is still difficult.

The Airport Line used a unique funding model with a private company, Bectal, building the line in exchange for receiving 120 acres to develop. The Interstate Line got over a 70 percent federal match – deemed a “moral match” by the Clinton administration because the previous Airport Line didn’t use any federal funding.



Portland's LRT map via google maps.
Source: google.com.

Beaverton Round

Beaverton Round was conceived as a high density TOD in the suburban community of Beaverton. The City issued an RFP in 1996 for 8.5 acres of land it owned around the transit station. The selected team proposed a mixed-use project with offices, condos, a theater and a hotel surrounding a public plaza.

The original developer did not get full financing in place and the project ground to a halt in 1998 when the developer declared bankruptcy. After several years of inactivity, the City sold the property to another developer, Dorn Platz Properties. Dorn Platz finished construction of four buildings – the semi-circle mixed-use buildings, a seven story parking deck and two other mixed-use condo and retail buildings. As the market began to decline, the developer relinquished the project back to the City.



The semi-circular building in Beaverton Round has condos above commercial space.

There were problems with getting bank financing because of parking. Although the City allowed for a 43 percent reduction in required parking, the bank wanted standard for suburban projects parking – a parking ratio of 5 cars per 1000 square feet.

The context of Beaverton Round adds to the challenge. This density of the project (3.2 FAR) is much higher than the surrounding area which is composed of one story retail uses (at less than a 0.5 FAR). The area nearby has 30 property owners many of whom dislike each other and the City. This makes redevelopment of the surrounding area an unlikely prospect.



The area adjacent to Beaverton Round includes low density development and surface parking.

Beaverton Round is relatively isolated. On the ground, it is difficult to tell that the Transit Center Station and the Beaverton Round Station are very close together because a bend in the light rail tracks prevents people from seeing from one station to the other. More importantly, there is no direct way to drive or walk from between stations. The connections between Beaverton Round and the main arterial road are



The light rail tracks run through Beaverton Round, however the station and retail storefronts cannot be seen from nearby roads. *Source: google.com.*

also problematic - one cannot see the Round from the main arterial because there are many other buildings in between. In retrospect, it would have been better to get the sight lines in place early.

As the City found out, the presence of light rail alone does not make a place special. Although there is some retail space, the Round lacks a major anchor and does not have critical mass to draw people. After 10 years in to the project, it is only half built yet the City is not giving up. The City bought more land two years ago and plans to focus more on the transportation sight lines and connectivity as the project goes forward.

On a more positive note, Beaverton Round has a successful cogeneration system that provides heating and cooling to all buildings in the Round. This system breaks even with only four buildings using it.



The semi-circular condo building (left), the light rail station (center) and the seven story parking garage (right).

Orenco Station

An Early Town Center

Orenco Station is widely considered to be a very successful pioneering TOD which has set the regional standard. Over the life of the project, the partnership between the city and the developer was instrumental to its success because everyone worked together to achieve the same goals.

When the project began in 1997, the developer began with the market they understood. “There were 25,000 cars on the main arterial, Cornelius Road, so that’s where development was focused,” says Michael Mehaffy, a former project manager for the Orenco Station developer PAC-Trust. Development occurred near the transit station later, with townhomes built there only three years ago. The area across the street from these townhomes has yet to be developed but will be able to support higher intensity development with mixed-use.



Most of the retail is oriented toward Cornelius Road, a main arterial road that runs through the project.

At times Orenco Station was described as the “non-profit” arm of PAC-Trust, a firm used to getting high returns with relatively little effort. Orenco Station was an experiment in an entirely new type of development; however many were surprised by how successful it was. PAC-Trust focused substantial effort on getting the right mix of retailers to make it work well.

Since a town center was a very novel concept at the time, there were many diseconomies that no longer exist as town centers have grown in popularity. Mixed-use development and live-work units are no longer a rare idea to zone or finance. The exploration of ideas was possible because PAC-Trust was able to provide long-term financing. No public subsidies were used, other than a \$100,000 CMAQ grant for pedestrian improvements.



The live-work units in Orenco Station were a novel concept when they were built.

Negotiating Road Design

The size of Cornelius Road was a subject of contention. The county wanted to make the road seven lanes wide, but the city and developer were able to negotiate the road down to five lanes. “It’s just barely walkable,” Mehaffy says in reference to Cornelius Road, which has two through-traffic lanes in each direction plus a left turn lane and a speed limit of 45 mph.

Narrower, more walkable local streets are another important design element. The local fire department participated extensively in the street design to balance emergency vehicle access with other design goals. One key solution was to include many east-west cross streets to provide fire trucks alternate routes.

Appreciating Architecture



The project is oriented toward Cornelius Road and the LRT station is south of the project by three blocks.

Source: google.com.

“The architectural quality of Orenco Station made it easy to compete with the “Southeast Boring Street” developments built elsewhere in the early 2000s,” says Mehaffy. A range of architecture is required including different lot widths, house colors and façade styles. Every house has an active side yard with the windows of the neighboring house placed higher to allow for some privacy in a compact area, however to get this type of jigsaw puzzle to work there had to be some uniformity in design.

Orenco Station residents were mostly empty nesters early on but now there are more young families. In a survey of the residents, originally about 11 percent walked to shopping areas but that number has risen to 50 percent. Orenco Station has appreciated 30 percent faster than the surrounding area, a testament to consumers voting with their feet and pocketbooks.



A single family house (above), fronts a green with a wall just the right height for sitting (below)



Gresham

Downtown Station

Despite being the fourth largest city in Oregon, downtown Gresham retains its small town feel even as suburban growth has occurred around it. Prior to construction, the light rail was not viewed favorably and so the station was located away from the downtown area. That view has changed, and now the City is rebuilding Beech Street as a pedestrian street to better connect downtown with the station. There is a two story façade limit downtown to retain the original character, but it is higher in the surrounding area where the City would like to see mid-rise mixed-use and residential development.



In downtown Gresham, the new pedestrian street (above), is intended to connect the LRT station with downtown (below).

The City manages downtown parking, which allows the small-scale retail to develop without having to provide on-site parking. In the future, the City has the option to encourage further development by building a parking deck to allow for redevelopment of its surface parking.

City Hall Station

In Gresham, it took a long time for development to occur after the light rail opened in 1986. At the City Hall station, the City said no to the big box retailers that were originally interested in building there, which was all the market could support. The City said ‘no’ to an early proposal for big box retail and decided to wait for better development. In late 1990s a lifestyle center was developed, which was not ideal but better than the original proposal.



The development around the City Hall station currently includes 575,000 square feet of retail, 700 residential units and more residential planned. The retail is supported by more than 100,000 people in Gresham and surrounding communities. Although the City didn’t want any big box retailers, the grocery store that originally anchored the center left and was replaced by a small format Best Buy. The mixed-use building with market rate rental had a subsidy to make the underground parking feasible.

Prior to any development the City built Civic Drive, a street that connected the main arterial road to an adjacent area on the other side of the LRT tracks. It was deemed the “road to nowhere” because there was no development



Civic Drive, the “road to nowhere” is now lined with successful retail.



The lifestyle center was developed with a street grid of about 200 x 400 foot blocks. The streets, dedicated to the City as a condition of development approval, will allow for redevelopment over time. *Source: google.com.*



The lifestyle center at the City Hall Station faces a surface parking lot. =

nearby. Since the area has developed, the opposition has faded away.

When the lifestyle center was proposed, the City insisted that the design include a rectangular grid of streets with on-street parking and required street dedication to the City as a condition for approval. The intent was to create a grid of small blocks (about 200 feet by 400 feet) that will allow for redevelopment over time of the surface parking and eventually the one-story retail uses.

In retrospect, the City regretted not having stronger design standards for buildings.

The standards at the time called for a two story façade, so several buildings with false second stories were built instead of actual two story buildings.

The City is planning a bikeway next to the train as a connector from Downtown Station to the City Hall Station for local residents. In the long-term, the City would like to see the redevelopment of a large 1980s strip mall that separates the City Hall station and the downtown area to connect those two areas.

The Yellow Line

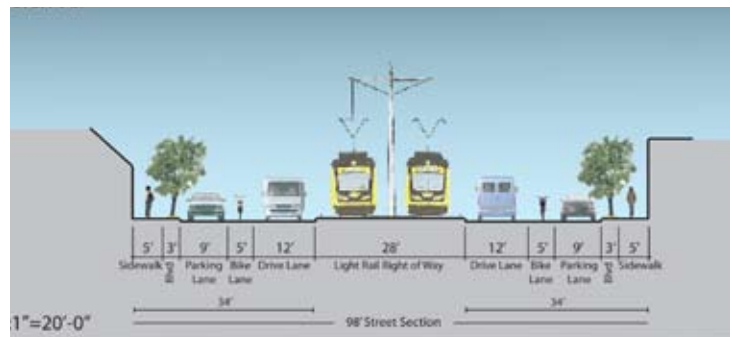
Open since 2004, the Yellow Line is Portland's newest light rail line. This line travels from downtown to the neighborhoods north of Portland along Interstate Avenue. Originally, a full south to north light rail line was attempted but it failed to gain community and political support. After the defeat of this larger line, a more incremental approach was taken in an attempt to gain enough political will and local matching funds. One of the major changes was to change the alignment from I-5 to In A smaller project, the Yellow Line, was created that focused specifically on improving the connection between to the north of Portland to downtown.

In the Neighborhood, For the Neighborhood

One of the challenges was to deliver a project appropriate for the area – something that would not be “yuppification” of the blue collar neighborhood. There was some irony that at the beginning of the project, North Portland seemed to be getting the short end of the stick with less funding than other lines. In the end the neighborhood got something better than other areas – a lot of listening to the people about what they needed, wanted and desired to see built.



The Yellow Line runs along Interstate Avenue through North Portland (above), within approximately a 100 foot right of way (below).



Construction Mitigation

Tri-Met did significant outreach to the business community, providing small business loans and other small business assistance. Portland State University's small business program helped many businesses by creating a logo, organizing paperwork or improving storefronts. “One business had kept all of their paperwork in a shoebox,” Jillian Detweiler, a senior planner for Tri-Met highlighted. “The program helped the business establish its first simple accounting system.” A lunch bus program was created to connect downtown workers to local restaurants. Not a single business closed during Yellow Line construction.

Designing the Line

The Yellow Line has a very basic design of its light rail components. For the light rail construction, tie and ballast was used in the industrial area and embedded tracks in the residential area. The station design template features a narrow platform and easy to maintain fixtures. The art program has actually lessened the maintenance because the mosaics installed attract less graffiti and don't require painting.

The street design for Interstate Avenue very unique and is not in any standard engineering manual. Along most of Interstate Avenue, there is only a 100 foot right of way from building face to building face, which is relatively narrow considering it includes the light rail tracks, car traffic, bike lanes, on-street

parking and sidewalks with the right of way. Although a lane of auto traffic was removed for the project, a 35 mph speed was required to be maintained. Due to visual clues such as narrow lanes and frequent pedestrian crossings that make it uncomfortable to speed, cars travel under the speed limit.

Historically, Interstate Avenue was not safe for pedestrians to cross in between the signalized intersections that are spaced every few blocks. As part of the Yellow Line project, additional pedestrian crossings were added in between stoplights. These pedestrian crossings are at an angle, so people walking across can see an oncoming train.

Funding

Many desirable components of the light rail design had to be cut to retain the large contingency required by the FTA. The local match for the Yellow Line was urban renewal district funding. The good part was that there was money left over for station area development – a line item that went from \$250,000 to \$4 million.

Development that “Fits”

One proposed project did not ‘fit’ the neighborhood was at the North Killingworth Station. The project, currently an empty grass lot owned by the Portland Development Commission (PDC), was burdened with many expectations for high density development and has not moved forward. Two developers were considered by PDC. Neither developer could build high end condos without a subsidy because there is no market demand for that type of housing in northern Portland. In the area, 20-25 units per acre fits in with the neighborhood, but PDC was seeking 200 units per acre – a density that would be out of scale and be difficult to achieve in the market.

The Patton Park Apartments project took a different approach. As a four story building of affordable apartments over retail, it is a similar scale as the rest of the neighborhood. For the development process, Tri-Met issued an RFQ to community developers and selected a well-known local community development organization. The building has all surface parking at 0.75 parking spaces per unit so the developer tried to self select people who wouldn’t have a car. The choice of affordable housing fits the real estate market and added stability to the neighborhood.

The Patton Park site was acquired by Tri-Met for construction staging. After construction, the former auto repair building site went through brownfield remediation prior to development. Other strategic moves to promote future development were made during the design of the Yellow Line such as changing the site of an electrical substation from a prime redevelopment site to another site further away.



An new pedestrian crossing makes it easier for people to get across Interstate Avenue between intersections with traffic lights (above). Patten Park apartments (below) fit with the 1-2 story housing nearby.



The Pearl District

Ten years ago, the Pearl District was the location of the former Hoyt Street rail yards and very few businesses. Today, there are 257 businesses in the Pearl District and 7,000 housing units including people with kids. Now, Hoyt Street is submitting for LEED-ND (Neighborhood Design) Platinum for the Pearl District, recognition of the neighborhood as a sustainable place based on smart growth and green construction criteria.

Within three blocks of the Portland streetcar, \$3.5 billion in new development has occurred without any subsidy. In downtown at the other end of the streetcar, 50 percent of development has occurred within three blocks of the streetcar close to its maximum allowable density. In areas further away from the streetcar, developers are only building at 40 percent of allowable density.

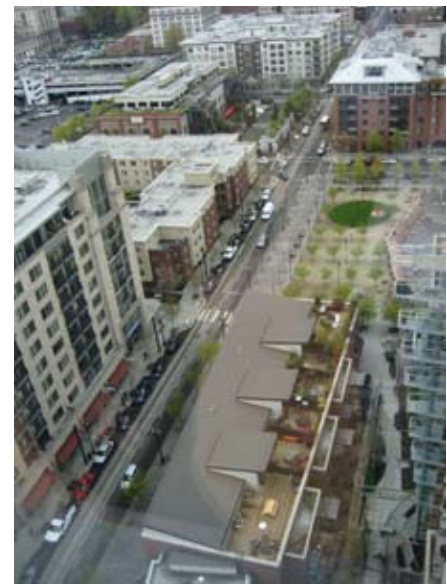
It took coordinated effort between the City and several developers to transform a brownfield to a desirable neighborhood. The public side would offer more density and public infrastructure in negotiations and the private side would bargain with parks, affordable housing. As each side would fulfill their commitments, they would in turn challenge the other side to raise the bar, resulting in both the public and private sectors continually raising their standards.

“Early on, Hoyt Street built a model of the future Pearl District,” Doug Shapiro, the vice president of construction for Hoyt Street Properties describes. “It was one of our best tools for marketing. People could look at the model and see a virtual lifestyle and imagine themselves in it.” A district of young professionals has changed since the beginning. The birth rate in the Pearl District has tripled, with many young professionals staying in place and beginning to have families. Hoyt Street is now looking at more family-friendly 3 bedroom floor plans. A public school is planned for the first floor of a future condo building and donated retail space hosts a children’s art program. Portland has a good public school system, so families with kids are willing to stay in the city.

The amenities in the Pearl District are one of the reasons it is successful. Jamison Square is considered the “kids park” where kids can play in a splash fountain. The second park, Tanner Springs Park, is much quieter, and is often used for reading or yoga. The third park, yet to be built, will have recreational activities with areas for sports and dogs. Flex car on-street parking spaces are also designated by city government, allowing lower parking ratios to work since it’s easier for residents to only have one car.



The Pearl District has been incredibly successful, with high density development, parks and a streetcar.



A Discussion with Homer Williams

“I like to build neighborhoods,” says Homer Williams of Pearl District developer Williams & Dame. “We are going through a societal change right now and things will be different from a few years ago. Over time, cities have become more interesting since the 1960s and 70s when life revolved around suburbs and the mall. Lifestyles have changed and the importance of the environment has changed. Cars and condos will be smaller in the future with 80 million aging baby boomers and more people interested in living and working in urban areas.”

Two important factors in the success of the Pearl District, according to Williams:

1. Connections are key – the streetcar linked the Pearl with downtown.
2. What happens at street level determines a neighborhood’s success and how a building behaves at street level is how it should be judged.

There is a direct relationship in terms of dollars per square foot with proximity to the streetcar line. Retail rents are much higher the closer you are to the streetcar. Although retail was anticipated to be profitable 4-5 years after it was built, it leased much faster than anticipated. “Former Portland Commissioner Charlie Hales was like a Johnny Appleseed promoting the streetcar, but no one realized that the streetcar would be such an economic engine at the time,” Williams says.

“The 200 by 200 foot grid is the ‘secret sauce’ in Portland,” Williams notes, “It is human scale which makes walking more enjoyable.” This grid allows for a restaurant to be placed on every corner. In a city like Los Angeles, the blocks are enormous and not human scale. These blocks are used by cars driving in and out of parking – very different functionally from the small blocks in Portland that work for people on foot. “Originally some said that retail wouldn’t work on 200 foot blocks because they were not big enough,” Charlie Hales commented. “But that has been proven untrue.”

Building neighborhoods is a lot like building small towns. They have an intimate feel, a small scale to the streets and no chain stores. People in the Pearl District still drive to Target or Costco once a week but the majority of the retail in the Pearl District is local. “Think about the neighborhood as the length and breadth of the transportation corridor,” Williams advises, “Such as, ‘the library is 10 minutes by streetcar.’ People take advantage of that.”

Parking typically drives everything in development but not in the Pearl. “I don’t build parking for retail and no one believes me,” says Williams. This doesn’t work for the chain stores that require parking ratios of 4 parking spaces per 1000 square feet of retail. A parking garage was built 3-4 blocks away at the edge of the Pearl. Since most retail is local, there is a lot of live work space and substantial loyalty to these local businesses.

It’s really important to have on-street parking because people drive by while they are searching for a parking space on the street. On-street parking is better according to Williams, than the shopping centers that have a



The buildings in the Pearl District are very successful at street level (above). The small block size (below) makes it easy to walk around the Pearl District. *source: google.com.*



small street with massive parking garages hidden behind a facade. People need to be able to go around the block when they are looking for a place to park, but people will figure out how to go where they want to go – you just have to make sure they have options.

The limited number of property owners in the Pearl made the process workable. There was agreement between owners on where to locate parks and to maintain high street design standards – things that couldn't be accomplished had the property ownership been fractured.

“It is a process – you need to know where you want to go and you can't design a neighborhood with 50 neighborhood groups and 200 people,” Williams says. If you start by asking a community what they want, you will get 100 different opinions. The unsolicited developer initiated projects can allow the greatest things to happen. For example, the South Waterfront area benefited from specific goals of the employers driving the project. There was a public process, but the project kept moving forward as it received input.

The government can lead a discussion of change, but there needs to be common idea of why the project needs to happen. “I never thought anything would be built over 7 or 8 stories in the Pearl, but that changed,” Williams commented. “The City's job is to protect the public as things change and evolve.” Yet when a city and neighborhood plan together without a developer at the table, the plan often doesn't work because it is not feasible in the market. The best process is when the developer approaches a site not ready to fight the City but by asking, ‘How do I make money building the City's plan?’

“Defensive planning is often the typical process,” notes Hales. “This occurred in the South Waterfront area, where there were some very vocal residents against the aerial tram.” The City offered to pay these residents 125 percent of the value of the houses, but no one accepted

“If you are thinking about putting in a streetcar, ask yourself, what do I want to activate?” Williams advises. “Don't run streetcars going in both directions on the same street either – you'll activate more streets if you locate a streetcar along two parallel streets. You have to decide what you want to accomplish and where you want to accomplish it.” In Portland, it was instrumental to have holistic system planning, coordinating the development of the transit with the City's zoning so that the area activated by the transit had the zoning to support the development.

“When I started developing in the Pearl, everyone thought I was crazy,” Williams reflects. “But the Pearl has been very successful over time and has the key design pieces that make it work – having eyes on the park to keep it safe, public art that people can enjoy together and the human scaled streets. These things make a huge difference to people.”



Although the buildings in the Pearl District have gotten taller over time, the quality is still high.

Lessons Learned

Politics & Light Rail

Rob Drake, former Mayor of Beaverton

Fourteen years ago, the discussion started about quality of life factors such as a cleaner environment and building tangible rail investments. With rail, as the public becomes invested in it, the city or county lines become less noticeable as people begin to think regionally.

Originally, voters turned down a light rail line yet the politicians had high gumption and built it anyway. Now, it would be hard to imagine the region without transit. Furthermore, transit oriented development is a new high-value reinvestment in communities that allows a city to maintain a desirable level of city services. The public process for TOD is cumbersome and slow, so you need to be patient. It's best to be deliberate and do it right the first time.



Investments over many years have made downtown Portland an enjoyable place to walk (above). Interstate Avenue (below) received better crosswalks and pedestrian infrastructure when the Yellow Line was built.

Connecting Transit & Land Use

Gil Kelley, former Planning Director, City of Portland

The design of your rail system is really critical at macro scale down to the micro scale. First, a freeway alignment is a poor location for rail. In many areas, the 70 percent of the existing development will be low density residential and likely to remain that way, but in the remaining 20-25 percent, that is where you want to strategically raise the density.



Second, the urban form and land use connection is important. You have not maximized the potential of your rail system if everyone gets in their cars once they get off the train. More value is generated from investing in a place than from investing in moving cars as quickly as possible. The Yellow Line moves more slowly down Interstate Avenue than if it had been located in I-5, but neighborhood benefits – going from a downward spiral to being an up and coming area.

Third, focus your investments and sweat the details at the small scale. Use a street grid pattern with small streets and wide sidewalks. Have the streets in the design review process to make sure they are right. Rezone for a mix of uses and require a minimum of two stories. Reduce the parking standards. In Portland, some households have one car instead of two or no car if they are near transit, although that can be harder to achieve in the suburbs. Consider your design standards carefully.

Education

Education is also really important. Metro, the regional government of Portland, holds workshops with many groups from local governments to bankers. The sessions with bankers were helpful in breaking the lending mentality against buildings with higher density in the suburbs. In the last decade, there has been a concentration of new housing around town centers and corridors. The regional discussion about

the concentration of new housing around town centers and corridors provides a valuable dialogue to everyone involved.

Implementation

The most popular tools in Portland are urban renewal funding (similar to tax increment financing), public private partnerships, redevelopment authorities and tax abatements. Urban renewal funding is one source of local matching funds for transit in Portland and can also be used for other purposes. Having a variety of tools is important.

What Didn't Work in Portland

Marcy McInelly, Associate Principal, SERA Architecture, Urban Design & Planning

Development around some stations has not occurred, even 20 years after the LRT opened, so the City of Portland asked our firm to analyze what happened. We found there were public policies inhibiting development, in particular, high density zoning and road design standards.

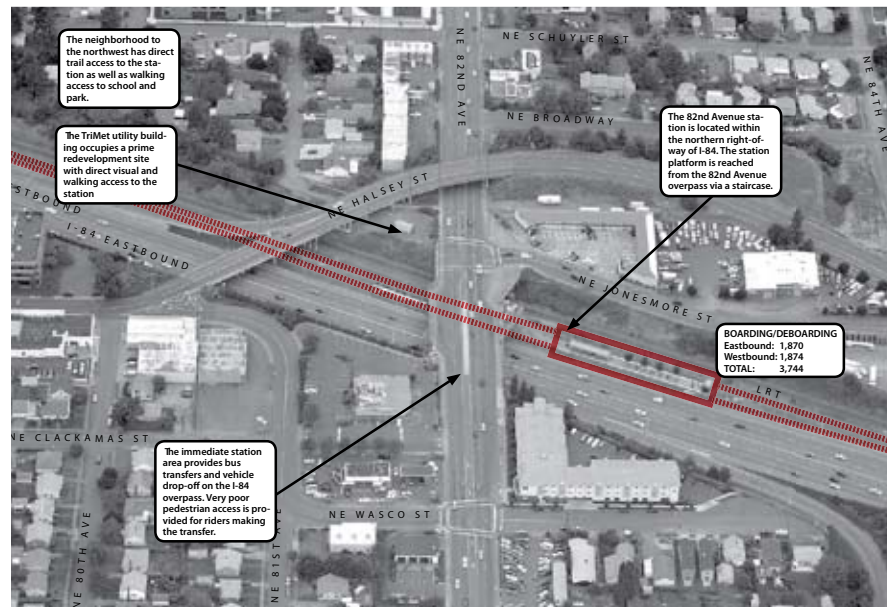
Getting the Right Density

At the 60th Avenue Station, the minimum density was too high. Subsequent to the light rail opening, people began to invest in single family homes in the neighborhood. After this investment, it decreased the likelihood of these homes ever changing into new high density development. Our recommendation was to lower the minimum density requirements so that future development would fit in with the existing areas better.

Road Standards Near Interstates

At the 82nd Avenue Station, road improvements were limited to the vehicle performance standards that the DOT would allow near interstate highways. Residential development could be built without affecting peak hour traffic, but the cap on new vehicle trips in the p.m. peak hour limited other development.

The LRT was placed along I-205 because the land was designated for transit when the freeway was built. The station areas were always located at major cross streets although that resulted in having to maintain a very high vehicle level of service (LOS) at station areas. The DOT has not permitted many pedestrian improvements that would improve the experience for transit riders who walk or bike to the station. If you have control of the street design, you have more opportunities to affect development.



The 82nd Avenue Station has experienced little development since the light rail opened here along I-205 due to a pedestrian-hostile environment. Source: Portland 10 Area Best Practices Assessments and Recommendations

Patience, Process & Goals

Ron Stewart, Principal, ZGF Architects

It is really important to have the political will to do what is right. Patience is also key. In Gresham, the MAX line opened in 1986 and the City didn't see development until 1999. The political leaders of Gresham had to wait along time for development and what they got was still not ideal, but it has the potential to evolve over time. What is important? Livability, affordability, sustainability.

Community Process

Community outreach is another important factor since people can stop a project if they are vocal in their opposition. Like kids going on vacation, people want to have a voice. A lot of questions arise about what to do with density, FAR, subsidies and many other issues. However, it doesn't make sense to take what works in one place and try to make it work everywhere else. You need to ask questions, do a push and pull to see what make sense to get the density right and the land uses right.

Goals

As a group, document what your goals and aspirations are. What do you want to see happen after the transit line is built? You can think of it as back-casting: where do you want to end up and how do you get there from where you are now?



Over 20 years after light rail was introduced in Portland, it is now an integral part of the city.



The splash pad in Jamison Square, a park in the Pearl District, is popular on a warm day (above).

"We have an economic development strategy around livability - people really want to live in Portland" - *Gil Kelley, former Portland Planning Director.*