

TRANSIT STATION AREA PLANNING PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

This grant application details the tasks to be performed in the Transit Station Area Planning Program. The Program will be undertaken over the next 24 months by the cities of Portland and Gresham, Multnomah County, the Metropolitan Service District (METRO), and Tri-Met. It will serve as a basis for Banfield Light Rail Transit related planning and development activities internal to each jurisdiction and facilitate coordination of these efforts.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In just five years, the Banfield light rail transit (LRT) project will result in a 15 mile operating transit line with 25 stations within the most densely developed urban corridor in Oregon. The effects of the Banfield light rail transit system will not be limited to transportation impacts. The system will have the potential to effect land use patterns, environmental quality, urban form and design.

This Planning Program is essential in order to achieve the maximum social and economic returns from the Banfield LRT system. The aim of the program is to identify how transit stations can affect the development, redevelopment, or conservation of neighborhoods. The Transit Station Area Planning Program will result in the preparation of a detailed plan and an implementation strategy for each of the 25 transit stations along the Banfield LRT system.

Local jurisdictions along the Banfield LRT corridor have provided a framework to reinforce the link between transit and land use by increasing the intensity and density of development around light rail transit stations through their comprehensive plans. Building on that adopted policy framework this study is intended to provide the information necessary to implement detailed station area plans. Even the best conceived plans, however, will not guarantee joint development.

"Joint Development" refers to the multiple use of transportation corridors and transit stops to maximize the economic return on public investment and to achieve and improve environmental relationships between transportation and adjacent land uses. Since transportation is generally a public sector responsibility and land development primarily a private function, joint development requires a successful partnership between both sectors to effect a proper relationship between transportation and land use.

The level, scale, and detail of land use planning activities necessary to prepare for light rail are necessarily beyond the "broad brush stroke" of

traditional comprehensive planning. Where a comprehensive plan, for example, shows a brown blob to indicate you can build medium density apartments -- the Transit Station Area Planning Program will go further: As part of each detailed station area plan a land use, urban design, and transportation plan and policy will be prepared together with a capital improvement program. In addition, an implementation strategy, identifying the public and private sector phasing requirements necessary for implementation of the station area plan will be prepared. For those stations having the highest short term development potential or that require a strong policy focus during the early implementation stages a financial and fiscal feasibility analysis would be produced. It will evaluate the market potential and investment aspects (both public and private) of a particular development scheme leading to implementation. Hence, a prospective developer will not only know the plan designation of a particular station area, but the market image, type of actions the public sector may be contemplating, an implementation strategy, and financial analysis of the proposed development scheme.

The Transit Station Area Planning Program will be carried out by the Cities of Portland and Gresham, and Multnomah County, and coordinated through a Project Management Committee. Close cooperation will obviously be necessary between the jurisdictions involved, their planning staffs, property owners, residents, business people, community organizations, and others who have an interest in the future of the transit station areas.

Station area planning is an essential link between joint development activities and the region's ongoing planning activities. The effectiveness of the Banfield Light Rail Transit Project will undoubtedly be enhanced by joint development projects resulting from the Transit Station Area Planning Program. In this manner, the program proposed is consistent with and supportive of the Administration's Urban Initiatives Program, and the UMTA Joint Development Program.

The Planning Program described in this grant application is consistent with UMTA funded planning occurring in conjunction with both the preliminary and final engineering phases of all new fixed guideway systems.

The Program has been closely coordinated with the design, construction, and operation of the adjacent Banfield Light Rail Transit system to be constructed by Tri-Met and the Oregon State Department of Transportation. Upon adoption of a recommended plan for a station, implementation will begin. Thus, both the construction of the light rail transit system and improvements agreed upon as a result of the Transit Station Area Planning Program can commence together. Roadway improvements in the vicinity of transit stations will be initiated, public facilities needed to serve the study area will be planned, and zoning and other development control changes will be processed.

Finally, as the Banfield LRT system nears the start of operation, the initial phase of development around the transit stations will likely begin. Private developers who have reviewed the plans and recognize the unique potential of the station areas will work with local jurisdictions in beginning development or redevelopment. Guided by the principles specified in the Transit Station Area Planning Program, this new development will fit the station area, complement the adjacent neighborhood, and relate to the transit station.

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DECISION MAKING

Considering restructuring the fabric of development around transit stations is too important to be left only to planners. Good analysis and information for decision makers and citizens is essential to produce plans which can be adopted by local government.

Citizen Participation

The Transit Station Area Planning Program is structured to maximize the involvement of citizens throughout the life of the program. Local governments using their established citizen participation channels will be responsible for their own citizen involvement programs.

Review by Policy Makers

Elected officials will be kept abreast of the program through review and adoption of significant issues or proposed plans at specified points in the process. By initiating this procedure, policy makers (local planning commissions, city councils, and the Policy Advisory Committee) can be advised of critical issues prior to the finalization of plans and policies. Four points in the work program (at months 4, 13, 16 and 23) have been identified at which decision makers would be explicitly involved. Specifically:

- Adoption of corridor-wide goals and objectives.
- Review/Adoption of a station planning area boundary and establishment of concerns to be investigated in the balance of the sketch planning phase.
- Review and identification of specific issues to be addressed around station sites in the detailed station area planning phase.
- Final adoption of plans and zoning.