



Protecting Affordable Housing in Transit-Served Areas

Ren Thomas Research & Planning
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Overview

Can we preserve affordable housing in transit corridors and transit-served areas (e.g. station areas, nodes)?

- Creating and using databases
- Coordinating transportation and housing plans
- Learning from/expanding existing approaches in other jurisdictions

Acknowledgement of the need for systemic change

ScotiaBank Insights and Reviews (January 18, 2023) recommends buying, building, retrofitting and building new social housing units to meet the need of low-income households

Ricardo Tranjan's *The Tenant Class* (2023) recommends a complete overhaul of the existing housing system, which functions only to pad the pockets of the wealthy and extract an increasing proportion from the working class

BC's provincial policy, *Homes for People* (2023), includes taxes on speculation and "flipping" units, as well as a \$500M Rental Protection Fund to provide grants to non-profits to buy existing rental and co-op buildings to protect these tenants

Data & information

National transportation survey

National database of existing low-income areas in Canada to identify areas for protection

Data sharing between municipal/regional authorities, across provinces

Jurisdictional power and budgets for local authority acquisition/holding of properties

More monitoring of municipal/regional proposed units within 1 km of transit stops, stations and in corridors (e.g. Region of Waterloo) to identify potential areas of displacement

Data & information

More monitoring of tenant protection from demolition and displacement, requirement for tenant relocation plans (e.g. Metro Vancouver municipalities, City of Mississauga)

Stronger tenant protection from displacement, rent increase caps (e.g. Province of BC, Province of Manitoba), stronger requirement for one-for-one replacement of demolished units (e.g. City of Mississauga, within a 3% rent of previous rents)

Multi-building 'renoviction' brings big-city scourge to small-town Ontario, tenants say



All 112 units in Trenton, Ont., complex issued renovation notices, tenants offered payouts

[Ben Andrews](#) · CBC News · Posted: Jul 10, 2023 5:00 AM ADT | Last Updated: July 10



Tenants of a Trenton, Ont., apartment complex, organized under the banner Hands off our Homes, have held renovation notices in March. (Submitted)

Data & information

Monitoring of local programs to build or acquire affordable units (e.g. City of Saskatoon, City of Regina, Metro Vancouver)

Coordination between transportation strategies, housing plans, and land use by-laws (e.g. Saskatchewan and Québec municipalities, City of Vancouver)

Policy & plan coordination

Municipal/regional designation of future transportation corridors could include designation of sites for new affordable units, provisions against displacement of tenants or loss of existing affordable units

TOD ordinances including affordability requirements (e.g. City of Austin)

Affordable or rental housing zones in land use by-laws (e.g. City of Saskatoon, Vancouver)

Policy & plan coordination

Requirements for Community Benefits Agreements in official plans (e.g. Vancouver Cambie Corridor Plan)

Shift of federal funds towards Community Land Trusts

Stronger engagement of community-based organizations as partners in preserving existing affordable housing (e.g. Logan Heights, San Diego, Fruitvale TOD, Oakland)

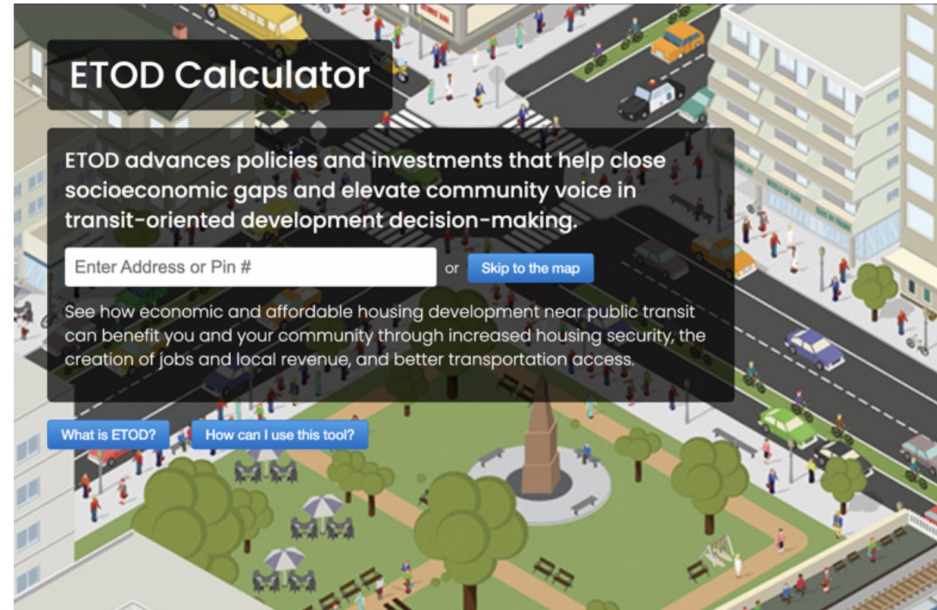
Stronger engagement with low-income communities in delivering targeted transit services (e.g. Bogotá, Guangzhou)

Policy & plan coordination

Prioritization of transit options benefitting low-income residents (e.g. City of Chicago eTOD Scorecard)

Requirement to monitor transit ridership on a public website to ensure low-income communities benefit from new infrastructure and routing (e.g. City of Chicago eTOD Scorecard)

More coordination between CMHC rental housing initiatives and public transit (e.g. US Low-Income Tax Credit), if it does not disqualify mid-sized and smaller cities



Centre for Traditional Neighbourhoods/City of Chicago
eTOD Calculator

Learning from/expanding existing approaches

Federal incentives for provincial/territorial, municipal collaboration on low-income housing (e.g. AccèsLogis)

CBA policies for provincially-funded transportation infrastructure projects (e.g. Provinces of BC, Ontario)

Municipal taxes on foreign property ownership, vacant apartments and empty homes (Province of BC/City of Vancouver)

Learning from/expanding existing approaches

Municipal housing development corporations (e.g. CityHousing Hamilton, HomeEd (Edmonton), Calgary Housing Company)

Municipal land banks (e.g. City of Saskatoon)

Incentives for the expansion of the co-operative and non-profit housing supply (Community Led Homes (UK), AGRTQ, Co-operative Housing Federation BC)

Regional TOD fund for affordable housing construction/preservation (Denver Regional TOD Fund, Indianapolis Equitable TOD)

Conclusions

We need better data and indexes to locate and preserve existing affordable units. Local governments would benefit from data sharing, including on displacement/eviction and tenant protection programs

A more coordinated approach to housing/transportation planning could be incentivized, and should be supported through provincial/territorial governments as long as it is accessible to small/mid-sized cities as well

Successful municipal programs could be replicated in other cities and others could be evaluated for effectiveness. International examples could be further explored for application to Canada. Local governments learn from each other

THE RIGHT MIX MATTERS!

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR INCLUSIVE CITIES



THE RIGHT MIX FOR A NEIGHBORHOOD INCLUDES:

MIX OF ACTIVITIES

**HOUSING, JOBS, SCHOOLS AND RETAIL
COMPLEMENTARY USES**

so that your neighborhood is vibrant from morning till evening and supports good transit over long hours.

**EVERYDAY NECESSITIES
ACCESS TO LOCAL SERVICES**

so that you can easily walk to at least an elementary school, health services, and a fresh food market to help meet your daily needs.

**GREEN AND OPEN SPACES
ACCESS TO PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS**

so that you can go out play, interact, and maintain your physical and mental health close by.



MIX OF PEOPLE

**HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL
INCOME LEVELS
AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

so that your neighborhood is diverse and offers housing options for all.

**LONG-TERM AS WELL AS NEW RESIDENTS
HOUSING PRESERVATION**

so that your neighborhood can grow without uprooting the people who already live there.

**OLD LOCAL BUSINESSES AS WELL
AS NEW ONES
BUSINESSES AND SERVICES PRESERVATION**

so that old businesses continue serving and employing local people while new ones enrich local activity.

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