

LESSONS FROM THE TWIN CITIES EXPERIENCE

A wide range of projects in the Twin Cities area provide useful experiences about TOD-type development that are worth sharing. Some lessons are noted on this page. Specific information about individual developments is available from the [project profiles](#).

VARIOUS TYPES OF TRANSIT SERVICE ATTRACT DEVELOPMENT.

- TOD can work for bus service as well as fixed guideway (LRT, BRT, commuter rail).

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[Raymond Avenue Station Area](#)
[SouthWest Station](#)
[Westgate Station Area](#)

DEVELOP A SHARED VISION.

- Take time to develop a common vision and consensus in cooperation with neighbors and businesses. Community education is key.
- Create a development concept and development guidelines. Maintain communication with businesses and neighbors.
- Develop a land-use plan that demonstrates community-desired development goals.
- Allow for flexibility in implementing the plan within an overall vision and development guidelines as the project evolves

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ENSURE THAT THE DEVELOPMENT IS A PRIORITY FOR CITY GOVERNMENT.

- The development should have a public commitment and priority by the city's elected leadership and professional staff.

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**FINANCING REQUIRES
MULTIPLE PARTNERS.**

- Multiple funding sources are needed to bring about a mixed-use project and multiple project goals.
- Public infrastructure investment and incentives play an important role.
- “Leveling the playing field” for redevelopment and brownfield projects requires financial assistance.

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**CREATE PARTNERSHIPS TO
SUPPORT THE PROJECT.**

- Advocates for change and improvement are important sources of support.
- The public needs to be involved and informed (neighborhood meetings, task forces).
- Developer experience with similar projects is important, as well as having a master developer.

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**REDEVELOPMENT AND
MIXED-USE PROJECTS
TAKE TIME.**

- Redevelopment projects are complex.
- Cities need to anticipate change and monitor market conditions.
- Plans will evolve. Be prepared for changes.
- Be prepared for the long haul.

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OBSERVE MARKET CONDITIONS AND REALITIES.

- Tenant mix is the key for mixed-use project success.
- The market controls commercial tenant selection and residential unit size.
- Know the regional and local market context for the project.
- The previous zoning may need to change to accommodate market realities (for example, pruning back retail-zoned land).
- The transit customer isn't the only retail customer in a mixed-use development.

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ESTABLISH LAND-DEVELOPMENT POLICIES.

- Offer density bonuses, lot-size reductions and setback reductions. Allow accessory units.
- Adopt flexible regulatory tools.

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USE PROVEN TECHNIQUES TO SHAPE STREET DEVELOPMENT:

- Reduce right-of-way and pavement width; allow on-street parking; provide sidewalks on both sides of the street; set boulevard-tree locations; allow alleys and roundabouts.
- Create walkable-street design.
- Establish shared-parking requirements.

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CREATE A “SENSE OF PLACE.”

- Citizens consider public gathering spaces and plazas and access to green open spaces to be important features.

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ONE GOOD DEVELOPMENT CAN TRIGGER BROADER AREA REVITALIZATION.

- A good development can send a favorable signal to the community and development community.
- A resulting property-tax value increase can be an incentive for additional revitalization.

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PAY ATTENTION TO PARKING NEEDS AND POSSIBILITIES.

- Structured parking supports increased density (mixed use and higher-density residential).
- Surface parking is important to retail.
- A master plan for parking, including shared parking, is important.

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PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS HELP A DEVELOPMENT SUCCEED.

- Sidewalks and walkable streets support pedestrian traffic.
- Trails and bicycle paths enhance the pedestrian experience.
- Bus stops/park-and-rides need to be integrated into the streetscape design.

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COMPATIBILITY WITH ADJACENT PROPERTIES AND DEVELOPMENTS IS ESSENTIAL.

- Compatibility helps make the overall development area work well.
- It boosts community acceptance and helps reinforce a sense of place.

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PLAN FOR EASING DISLOCATIONS DURING DEVELOPMENT PHASES.

- Multi-phased projects require attention to residents/tenants and customers during construction.

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PLAN WITH FUTURE CHANGES IN MIND.

- Build in flexibility for expansion and accommodating changing market needs and lifecycle needs

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