



EQUITABLE TOD CENTERS COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING



Equitable Transit Oriented Development (ETOD) Centers Community Wealth Building

The Strong, Prosperous, and Resilient Communities Challenge (SPARCC) is a multiyear initiative investing in and amplifying local efforts in six regions (Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, Memphis, and San Francisco Bay Area) to ensure that public investments in the built environment reduce racial disparities, build a culture of health, and respond to the climate crisis. The initiative's long-term goal is to change the way metropolitan regions grow, invest, and build through integrated, cross-sector approaches that benefit low-income people and communities of color.

WHAT IS EQUITABLE TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (ETOD)?



ETOD is a policy, process, and a development form that facilitates equitable community development serving the needs of existing residents, especially the most vulnerable, and of future residents and employers. ETOD is centered on the people who live, work, and create in communities of color and in low-income communities that are served by high-capacity transit service whether bus and/or rail. ETOD can be an important strategy to create a healthy, climate resilient, and equitable future for all while also generating economic value and providing public services more cost effectively. [Community ownership is key to building a more just economy.](#)

WHY MUST ETOD CENTER COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING?

ETOD encompasses more than transit and affordable housing. It includes workforce development and access to parks, open space, health care facilities, community centers, grocery stores, schools, and other community-serving needs. Strengthening local control and community ownership must be part of this process and may include keeping the land adjacent to transit stations in the hands of residents and using it to strengthen community wealth building. Land values near transit often come at a premium and the benefits and value of that land is often not conferred to residents through ownership of the physical assets. While increasing equitable access to transit is crucial, so is increasing ownership and wealth building opportunities to the properties and processes that drive ETOD. This requires that community members and civic stakeholders are seen as equal partners with public agencies to plan, design, and implement plans, policies, and investments that include improved public health, climate, and community wealth building outcomes, especially for BIPOC people of all ages and incomes.

LOCAL ETOD EFFORTS CENTERING COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

ATLANTA'S SOCCER IN THE STREETS

[Soccer in the Streets \(SITS\)](#) is an Atlanta-based non-profit organization whose mission is to provide equitable access to the sport of soccer regardless of race, gender, religion, or socioeconomic status, while also serving the surrounding community. SITS empowers underserved youth through sports-based training, character development, mentoring, and employability programs by engaging them on the field, in small-group classroom sessions, through hands-on experiences and activities, and through participation in youth leadership councils.



In 2016, SITS began a city-wide community project, known as StationSoccer to turn underutilized spaces in and around MARTA transit stations into a network of soccer fields. The goal is to connect communities, create safe spaces and cultivate healthy lifestyles through sport and transit. SPARCC helped to fund two of the four StationSoccer locations owned by the non-profit that enable both kids and adults to celebrate their own station community and play other station teams. Impact extends beyond the physical fields and is informed by the voices of Black and Brown families. SITS is working with each location's community partners to thoughtfully design and program activities on and off the field, with the inclusion of community classrooms, community theatre space, healthy food access and community gardens. In 2020, MARTA donated a decommissioned rail car to SITS and it will become a community learning center for one of the StationSoccer locations enabling parents to access, along with direct income opportunities.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDS



Innovative use of regional transportation funds by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) supports [two affordable housing funds focused on projects near high-quality transit](#). The Transit-Oriented Affordable Housing (TOAH) Fund invests in producing new affordable housing, while the Bay Area Preservation Pilot (BAPP) provides resources to preserve unsubsidized affordable housing. SPARCC Bay Area partners including the Great Communities

Collaborative (GCC) and its advocacy and developer champions were deeply engaged to establish both. TOAH, a \$40 million initiative created in 2011, has supported [affordable TOD projects across the region](#).

BAPP, launched in 2018 and revised by MTC in 2021, is being used by community developers to advance preservation projects. For example, in late 2020, the Northern California Land Trust (NCLT) received a \$1.6 million BAPP loan to acquire two adjacent 8-unit buildings in East Oakland, located half a mile from the new "Tempo" Bus Rapid Transit line. NCLT purchased the properties from an owner who was planning to buy out tenants, rehab the buildings, and re-rent the apartments at more than double the price. The tenants, predominately low-income people of color, had been resisting buyouts and evictions from the prior owners for several years. NCLT's acquisition helped prevent their displacement and provided them with a permanently affordable, community-controlled home. The rehab work on the properties is also expected to reduce energy use and costs, as well as improve indoor air quality for residents. In addition to the BAPP loan, the project also used \$2.4 million from a local infrastructure and housing bond fund and a \$1.3 million loan and \$200,000 capital grant from SPARCC.

CHICAGO'S ETOD PILOT PROGRAM

In October 2021, the City of Chicago announced 11 community-driven projects that promote healthy, walkable, and affordable neighborhoods across Chicago to participate in the inaugural [Equitable Transit-Oriented Development \(ETOD\) Pilot Program](#).

The Pilot Program was launched as early implementation of the City's first-ever ETOD Policy Plan (adopted in June 2021), and included a track for community-proposals and specific resources for them.



Chicago's ETOD goals include driving investment near transit on underutilized land in disinvested areas while also preventing displacement and promoting affordability in high-cost and gentrifying neighborhoods. The selected pilots range from affordable housing to a community-owned grocery store to walkability and public art improvements near transit. In partnership with SPARCC partners Elevated Chicago and Enterprise Community Partners, the City is providing \$160,000 in microgrants to enhance the equity components of the proposals, and technical assistance to support predevelopment and project construction.. The winners were selected through a community-driven application process, with each winner receiving up to \$20,000. Among the projects selected is the Coalition Food Hall near the California CTA Green Line station, which will generate community equity, create employment opportunities and build a welcoming space for the Garfield Park community. This includes implementing a community investment vehicle (CIV) tailored for local residents to contribute as investors in the development.

URBAN LAND CONSERVACY TURNS FORMER UNIVERSITY CAMPUS INTO COMMUNITY SPACES



In July 2021, [Urban Land Conservancy \(ULC\)](#), acting as the lead buyer, purchased the former Johnson & Wales University Denver campus along with Denver Public Schools (DPS) and Denver Housing Authority (DHA) specifically to support community ownership and wealth building objectives. The west side of the campus will be used by DPS to expand the Denver School of the Arts. DHA will provide affordable housing on the south end of the

campus.

ULC utilized the [Metro Denver Impact Facility \(MDIF\)](#) to purchase the property and has established a 99-year ground lease on the east side of campus to preserve affordability and enable community-serving uses in perpetuity. East campus partners include the Kitchen Network, Denver's longest-running shared kitchen, which incubates specialty food businesses allowing the organization to double its impact and number of small businesses served. The MDIF is a \$52 million revolving source of loan capital that supports ULC's creation and preservation of permanently affordable housing, nonprofit facilities, schools, and community-serving spaces across Metro Denver.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON LOCAL ETOD EFFORTS

- » Atlanta – [Soccer in the Streets](#) – [StationSoccer](#), james@soccerstreets.org
- » San Francisco Bay Area – [Great Communities Collaborative](#), gcc@sff.org
- » Chicago – [ETOD Pilot Project snapshot](#), Roberto@ElevatedChicago.org
- » Denver – [Urban Land Conservancy](#), jbissell@urbanlandc.org
- » SPARCC [Community Ownership to Build Back Better](#) & [ETOD Resources](#), Mariia@MZStrategies.org