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# Linking Transportation Policy and Public Health

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## Transportation, Economic Development, and Health: Breaking Open Policy Silos

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### 1. What are the most compelling established and/or emerging connections between this area of transportation policy and health and equity issues and outcomes?

Transportation policy influences *what kind* of economic development occurs (single use or mixed use), *where* it occurs (on the suburban fringe or near the center), and *who benefits* (rich or poor, white or black). As shaped by transportation policies, economic development has both direct and indirect effects on health. Denser, mixed-use development directly affects health by reducing car use and increasing public transit, walking, and bicycling, which improves physical activity and air quality.

By influencing the location and beneficiaries of economic development, transportation has indirect effects on health. In particular, transportation policies can support economic development that reduces poverty, inequality, and segregation (economic and racial), which will, in turn, improve health outcomes. Greater transportation equity can be achieved without sacrificing transportation efficiency.

### 2. What are key opportunities to improve public health by changing transport policy in this area?

If transportation policy can break out of the transportation %silo+and include a wider range of stakeholders in policy formation, it can heighten accessibility to opportunities and reduce inequities that damage health. Specific examples include:

- Mixed-income transit-oriented development (TOD) can increase transit use and efficiency at the same time that it enhances job access for low- and moderate-income families and reduces their transportation costs. The principal levers for promoting mixed-income TOD are: the ability to flex transportation funds to support TOD; giving incentives for mixed-income TOD higher priority (location-efficient incentives); enacting overlay zoning codes that reward developers who provide affordable workforce housing with density bonuses; providing aid to community-based organizations (CBOs) to plan for mixed-income TOD.
- Local workforce development policies attached to transportation funding can provide good jobs to the communities and people who need them the most. By lifting up poor neighborhoods and people, transportation-oriented workforce development policies indirectly improve health outcomes. The primary policy levers for local workforce development are: the ability to flex transportation monies for local workforce development; hiring goals for women, minorities, and low-income persons on transportation projects; and implementation of local workforce development by stakeholder processes involving government, CBOs, and construction unions.