

**Breaking Down Policy Silos:  
Transportation, Economic Development, and Health**

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# Transportation Equity Network (TEN)

- Founded in 1997
- 300 grassroots organizations
- Smart Growth America, Gamaliel Foundation
- Local activism: policy innovation develops at the local level and needs to be supported (brought to scale) by state and federal policies

# Silo-Driven Transportation Policy Process Stifles Local Innovation

- Goal of mobility and congestion relief empowers transportation engineers and experts at the expense of other stakeholders.
- Goal of accessibility with the least cost to the environment and health empowers diverse stakeholders to be at the table when transportation decisions are made.

# Beyond the Efficiency-Equity Trade-off

- False trade-off between efficiency and equity
- By thinking outside of policy silos, diverse stakeholders can devise win-win solutions
- Taxpayers get “more bang for the buck”

# Transportation and Economic Development

- Transportation affects
  - ▣ *What kind* of development (mixed-use vs. separated uses)
  - ▣ *Where* (suburban fringe or urban core)
  - ▣ *Who benefits* (rich or poor, white or black)



# Direct Effects of Transportation

- Denser, mixed-use forms of economic development decrease automobile use and increase public transit, walking, and bicycling with clear health benefits.

# Indirect Effects

- Transportation policy shapes the location and beneficiaries of economic development that has strong effects on:
  - 1. Poverty
  - 2. Inequality
  - 3. Segregation (racial and economic)

# Effects of Concentrated Poverty on Health



- 1. Lower Activity Levels
- 2. Poor Air Quality
- 3. Inadequate Diet
- 4. High Stress

# Transportation ↔ Jobs

- Challenge

- Deindustrialization
- Pockets of poverty and unemployment
- Job-housing mismatches
- Low education level

# Construction Jobs as One Solution

- Average pay = \$18.29
- Don't need a college degree
- Earn while you learn
- Apprenticeship system with clear job ladders
- Looming skill shortage (245,900 per year from 2004-2014)

# Transportation Generates Construction Jobs

- SAFETEA-LU will generate 1.9 million direct on-site construction jobs
- Two provisions on workforce development
  - ▣ 1/2 of 1 %
  - ▣ “Sense of Congress” (Section 1920)

# Local Workforce Development Experiments

- Alameda Corridor
- St. Louis I-64
- Kansas City (Paseo Bridge)
- Michigan
- Minnesota

# Policy Levers

- Extend 1/2 of 1% to transit
- Require mandatory workforce development for all projects over \$10 million (stakeholder process involving government, civic sector, and trade unions).
- Transportation workforce development can address concentrated poverty and unemployment at the same time it addresses the shortage of skilled workers.
- Public savings of targeted job development: food stamps, prisons, medicaid, etc.

# Transportation ↔ Housing: Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

- Growth of a new generation of light rail systems
- Enhanced accessibility of land around transit stations increases land values, making denser development possible
- Growth in demand for housing around transit stations; we will need 10 million additional housing units within a ten-minute walk of transit stations by 2030.

# Mixed-Income TOD As an Anti-Poverty Strategy

- ▣ Cost of owning an auto: \$9,498 in 2007
- ▣ Average American family spends 19 percent of household income on transportation
- ▣ Poorest households spend 55 percent
- ▣ Rising gas prices are like a regressive tax
- ▣ TOD residents can reduce transportation costs

# Why Mixed-Income TOD Makes Economic Sense

- Low-Income people use public transit more
  - ▣ Families making less than \$20,000 in 2001 represented 14% of population but 38 percent of all transit riders. (Poor people are green!)
  - ▣ Low-income residents require fewer parking spots (from 1 parking spot to .25 per housing unit)— a savings of \$15-30,000 per unit
  - ▣ Reduction in poverty and economic segregation will reduce health care costs, among other public benefits.

# Transportation Equity Policy Dilemma: Buses versus Light Rail

- Transportation inequities are embedded in the built environment. We need short-term policies to meet people's needs where they now live (more buses).
- 75 percent of the entire built environment will be constructed in next 30 years. We need a long-term strategy to create a more equitable built environment.