The background image shows a transit station platform with a train. To the left is a large, multi-story brick building. The sky is blue with some clouds. The overall scene is a city transit hub.

10 Years of TOD in the Denver Region: A Cup Half Full?

**Are we creating and exploiting
synergies on our transit
investments?**

Tim Van Meter

Van Meter Williams Pollack

Architecture & Urban Design

San Francisco

Denver

WE HAVE POWERFUL TOOLS

DRCOG Metro Vision 2030

"Goal: Encourage the development of higher-density, mixed-use, transit and pedestrian-oriented urban centers through out the Denver region."

Blueprint Denver

TOD is the organizing concept for Blueprint Denver. It explores the important relationship between land use and transportation and advocates that land-use and transportation decisions be made in conjunction with each other.

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Central Corridor

INTENT

To prove rail can work

FACTS

- Cost \$118.4M
- 14 Stations
- 1,600 Parking Spaces
- 5.3 miles long
- Year Completed 1994
- CPV Spur 2002

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Successes:

We Got it Built and it Works!
Huge Community Asset for
5-Points & CPV Development

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Central Corridor

Missed Opportunities:

Lack of understanding of the relationship of transit to land use

Five Points

- Community Consideration
- Physical integration of infrastructure to neighborhood
- Transit alone doesn't drive real estate- Transit is an amenity

10th & Osage

- With out a master plan - Land Assemblage is the number one obstacle to TOD
- Need Advanced planning by jurisdiction -so tools are in place in public sector to enable private sector development.

Auraria Campus

Lack of political will
= lack of integration



Central Corridor

Missed Opportunities:

Lack of understanding of the relationship of transit to land use

Alameda

Transit must be integrated into adjacent land uses.



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1-25/ Broadway/ Gates

Lack of understanding of significance and permanence of transit by Gates



Southwest Corridor

INTENT

Efficiency & Service

FACTS

- Cost \$164.1M
- 6 Stations
- 2,597 Parking Spaces
- 8.7 miles long
- Year Completed 2000



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Successes:

Jurisdictional vision
can transform a city

- **Public sector must have a vision, be clear about goals, be persistent, think long term, put groundwork in place and participate as a full partner in making that vision into a reality**



Southwest Corridor



Successes:

Community Building

(1-25/ Broadway- Cherokee Gates & City Center Englewood)

- Rider ship- The proof is in the use
- Community Ownership
 - advisory committee of adjacent stakeholders (Cherokee)
 - Balance of locally owned businesses & national franchises (Englewood)

Southwest Corridor



Missed Opportunities:

Southwest Corridor

Mineral & Santa Fe/ Littleton- Huge lost opportunity because of lack of vision & political will. Yes to Auto Oriented Retail, No to Urban Housing

Poor Siting of Transit Stations throughout corridor due to Cheapest ROW track location. 1/2 a TOD if any



Missed Opportunities:

Littleton Downtown/ Englewood

(Same lesson repeated with Dayton, Lincoln, Five Points, Nine Mile)

Pay Attention to the market

- Transit is an amenity, not a “driver” of TOD. Retail follows rooftops not transit
- Development has certain formulaic conventions that must be followed



Southeast Corridor/ T-REX

INTENT

- Response to Severe Congestion
- Getting to the DTC
- Test of Public Financing

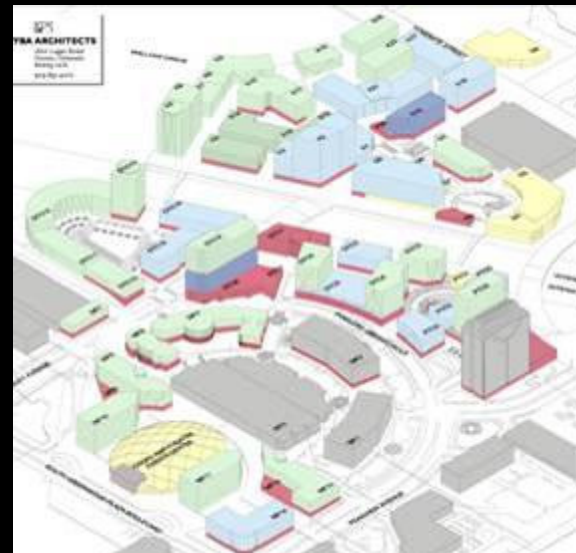
FACTS

- Cost \$183M
- 14 Stations
- 2,520 Parking Spaces
- 19.1 miles long
- Expected to open Fall 2006

Successes:

Southeast Corridor

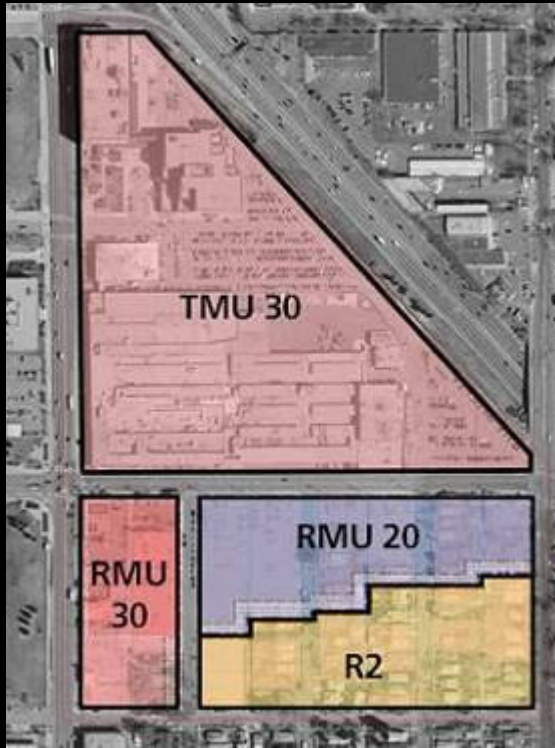
- Early planning by cities forced by design build process (Lincoln, Dayton, Nine Mile, Arapahoe, County Line)



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Successes:



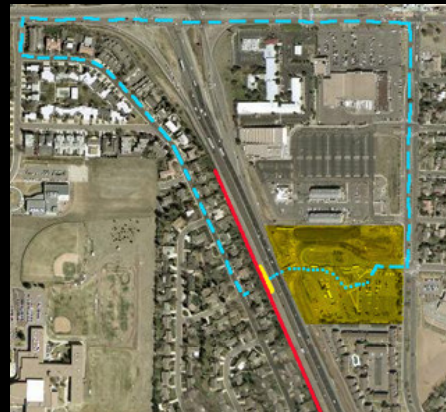
Southeast Corridor

- **TOD enabling tools created**
(Denver, Douglas County, Aurora, Greenwood Village, Englewood)
 - Increased leadership & political will
 - Political champions
 - Flexible Comprehensive Plans
 - Flexible zoning codes (flexible but predictable)
 - Public/ private partnerships
 - Incentives; higher density, special zoning, waivers and variances
 - Public Investment
 - Process is more developed & understood
 - Importance of building flexible, inclusive relationships recognized

Missed Opportunities:

Southeast Corridor

- Building track in cheapest ROW
 - Creates physical barrier/ impassable edge
 - Transit should be hub not appendage
 - More difficult to use
 - Obvious disconnect between transit & land use
 - Inherently not pedestrian oriented, but auto oriented



Missed Opportunities:

Southeast Corridor

**THESE ARE
THE
STATION
VISIONS!**



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Missed Opportunities:

Southeast Corridor

Place Making & Barriers

- Impassable edges impact how TOD operates, the 1/4 mile walk able catchments area changes based on interest and connectivity lack thereof.



Missed Opportunities:

Southeast Corridor

Design/ Build Process: Good for Laying Track, Bad for TOD

▪ *Advance planning*

- Transit agency must work with landowner for planning to avoid huge infrastructure mistakes that cannot be corrected

▪ *Disconnect in timeline of D/B vs.. planning and education processes*

- Speed of the Design Build process eliminates choice and flexibility and exponentially complicates TOD opportunities.

▪ *Limit D/B capacity*

- Design- Build should be limited to tracks, platform and highway – leave station area planning out of contract- station area design is highly volatile and market dependent.

▪ *D/B gets things done, but at a cost*

- Design- build forces choice, but is TOD's worst enemy

▪ *Design portion requires as much attention as Build portion*

- If used again imperative to create teams based not just on operations and engineering standpoint but based on contextual design for each station.

FasTracks

FACTS

- **Cost \$4.7Billion**
- **60+ Stations**
- **21,000 Parking Spaces**
- **119 miles of new light rail
and commuter rail**
- **Expected Completion
2016**

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Successes:

- **Early Station Area Planning by Cities and Developers**
- **Transit Ready Development [TRD]**
- **Most Lines on Existing Rail ROW's**

Critical Observations: **What We Have**

1. Stations focused on **auto access** with **big parking** on big roads in **Cheap ROW**
2. **Node** took precedence over Place
3. **Time** took precedence over Community
TOD is the rare exception, not the rule
4. Most of the development activity being planned is not TOD, but its impersonator **TAD [Transit Adjacent Development]**.
TAD does a better balance of place and node, but fails to fully take advantage of location and synergy, limiting its full potential.



Critical Observations: **What We Need**

1. Smart Growth demands that **Land Use as an Equal Partner to Transit**
2. **Partnering** [we have no lead agency for TOD]
3. **Envisioning** [regional, corridor & station]
4. **Build Places, not Projects**
5. **Assemblage of Land**



A New Paradigm of TOD Principals

1. Above All Else, Make It Pedestrian
2. Transit as a Framework for Regional Growth / TOD as the Model
3. Create a Regional Vision, with Teeth
4. Explore Regional Revenue Sharing
5. Pay for Parking
6. Embrace a Mixture of Uses
7. Minimum Densities / Maximum Parking
8. Prohibit Auto Oriented Uses in Transit Zones
9. Create a Model Transit Overlay Zone- Form Based Code



Rethink Station Area Planning

1. Identify station area principals and market potential during corridor EIS
2. Commit to a basic development framework before Preliminary Engineering completion
3. Adopt station area plans before Station Final Engineering Design completion
4. Adopt zoning and incentives prior to station construction





Re-State the Question

The question has been “How do we want our **transit** network to work best ?



Maybe the question should be “How do we want our **cities** and **neighborhoods** to work best.



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**If you plan cities for traffic, cars
& transit-**

You get traffic, cars & transit.

**If you plan for people, places &
transit-**

**You get people, places &
transit.**

List Of Sources/ Interviews

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