Road to Resilience: Using Transportation to Revitalize Cities

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President and CEO
Reconnecting America

Reinventing Older Communities: Building Resilient Cities
Philadelphia Federal Reserve
Philadelphia, PA
May 11, 2012

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At Reconnecting America, we help transform promising ideas into thriving communities – where transportation choices make it easy to get from place to place, where businesses flourish, and where people from all walks of life can afford to live, work and visit.

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Our Partners:

CTOD CENTER FOR TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Transportation For America

- Creating a national marketplace for TOD, working with cities, transit agencies, developers, investors + communities
- Improving practice through technical assistance, research + policy reform
- On-line Clearinghouse of TOD + Transit Best Practices

- A coalition with over 500 members of business, housing, environment, development, labor, health, aging and transportation interests
- Campaign Focus on the Next Federal Transportation Bill
- Transportation investments that are economically sound, respond to markets and improve the lives of people

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Washington is no longer “business as usual”

The federal government has entered into partnerships

HUD, DOT and EPA are working together

Transportation For America

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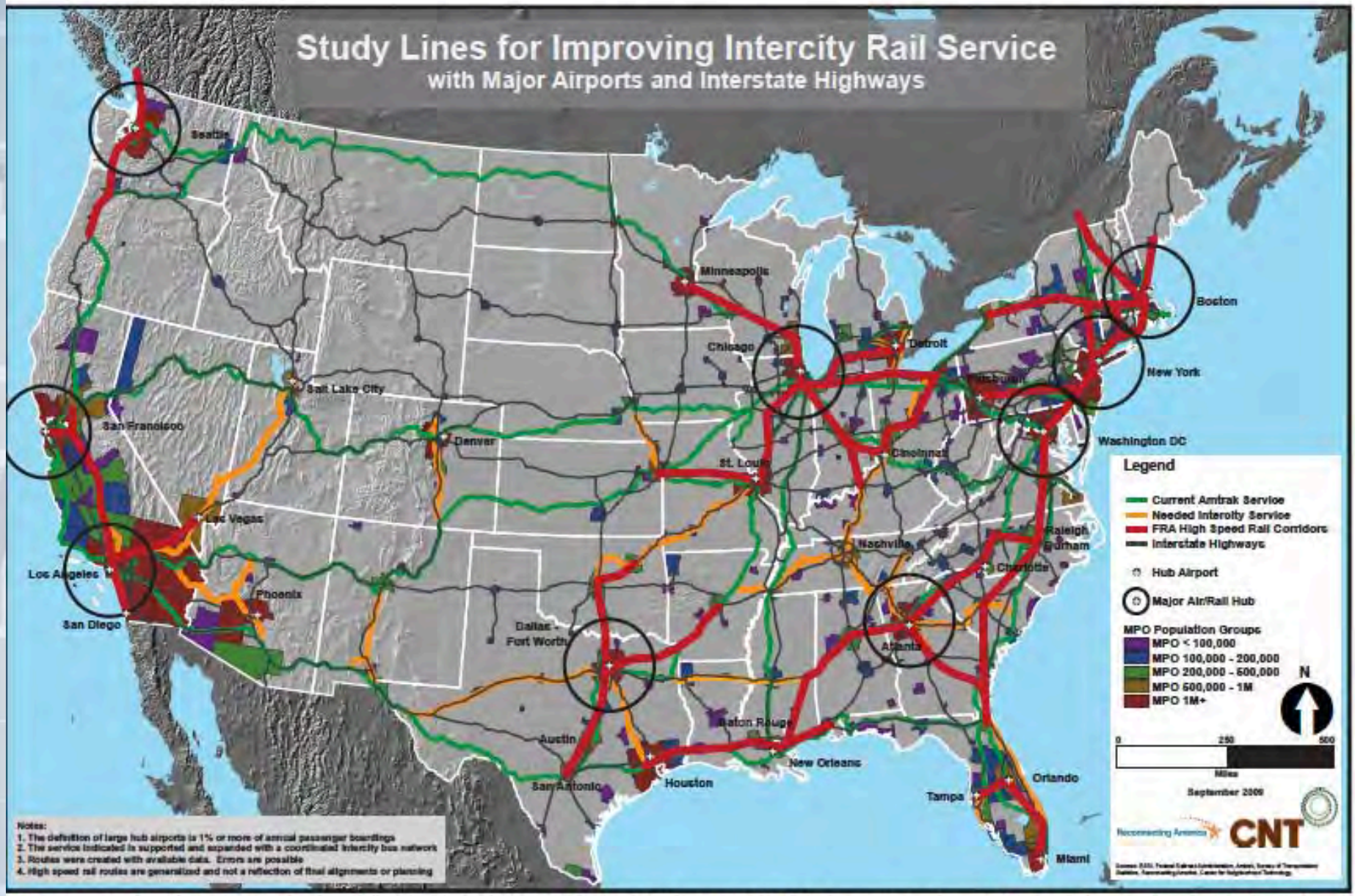
The Federal Outlook – Status of Reauthorization

- Current law and gas tax ends June 30th, 2012

- March 14 – Senate passed MAP-21, a two year bill
  - keeps transit funding at current levels
  - maintains local control over funding of various transportation projects which would make communities safer for walkers and bikers
  - provides grants for station-area planning to support transit-oriented development

- April 18 – House passed a bill which is basically a 90 day extension of existing law – SAFETEA-LU – from July 1 to September 30
  - keeps transit funding at current levels
  - includes approval of the Keystone XL pipeline

- Conference committee negotiations on the specific policies that will make up a final reauthorization bill started May 8



This map was developed by Reconnecting America and the Center for Neighborhood Technology in 2003 and updated in 2009. Recomendations for needed intercity rail lines were based on intercity travel demand from the American Travel Survey of 1995. High speed rail routes are generalized from the FRA's designated high speed rail corridors map.

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What We Thought We Were Getting

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What We've Gotten…this…

…and this…

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…and this…

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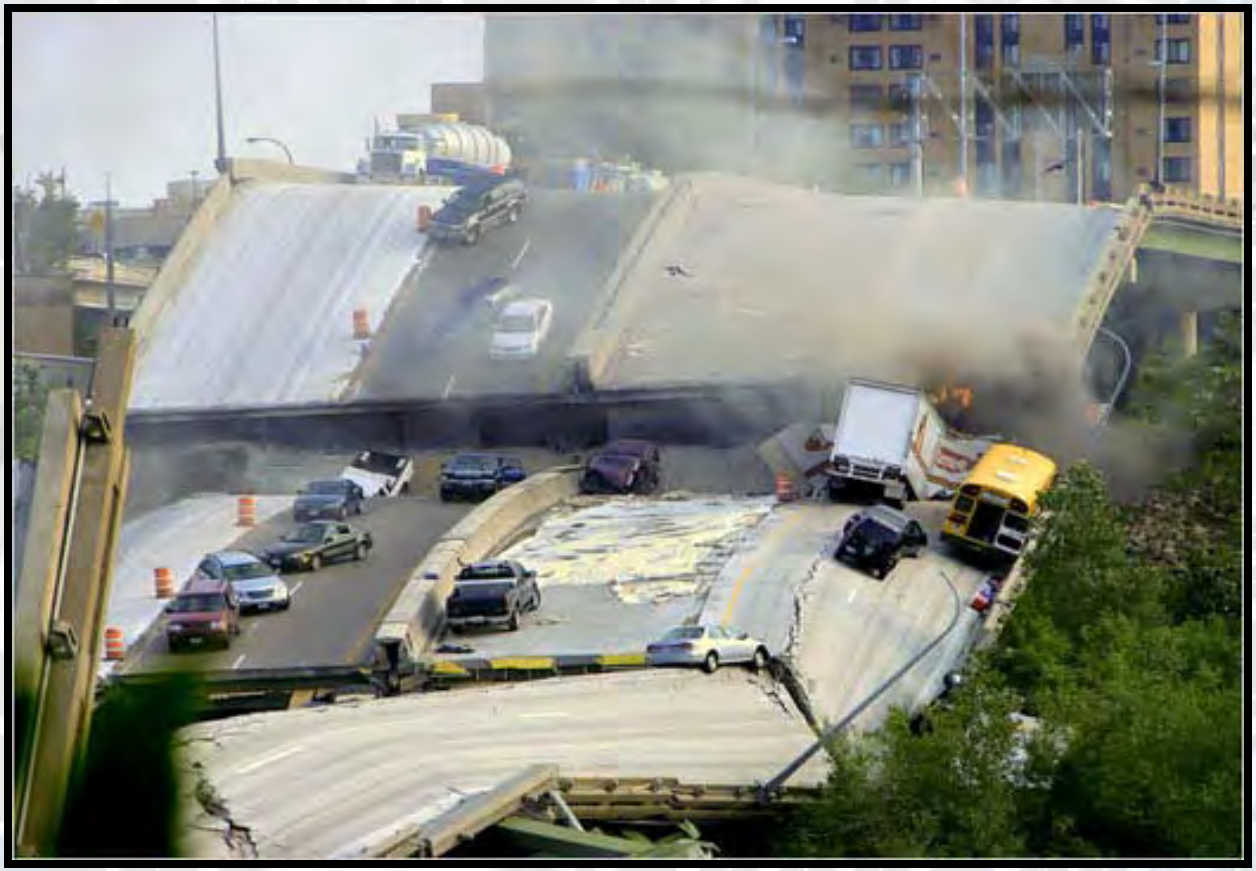
…and this.



What is Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)?

Transit-oriented development is a mixture of housing, retail and/or commercial development and amenities integrated into a walkable neighborhood and located within a half-mile of quality public transportation.

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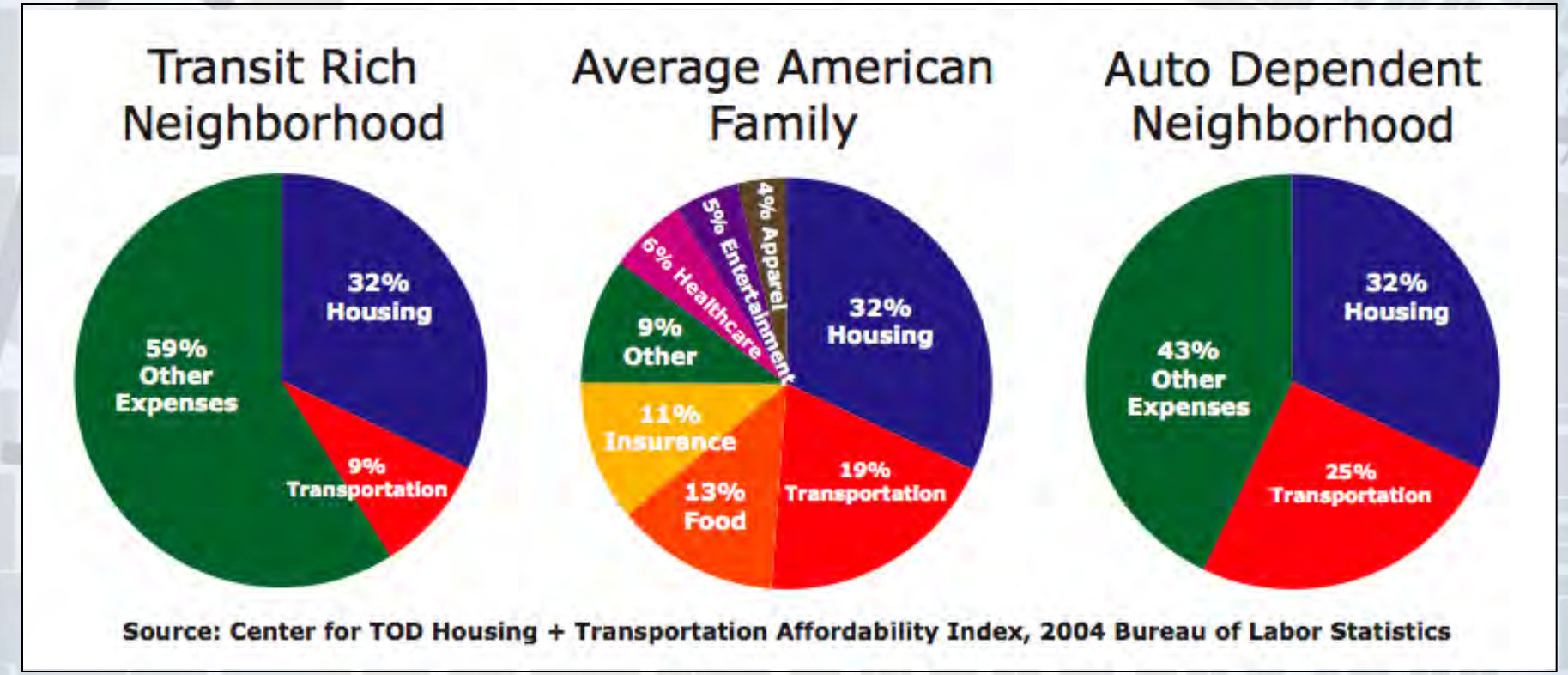
Benefits of TOD: Household Savings

Neighborhoods with transportation choices save households money.



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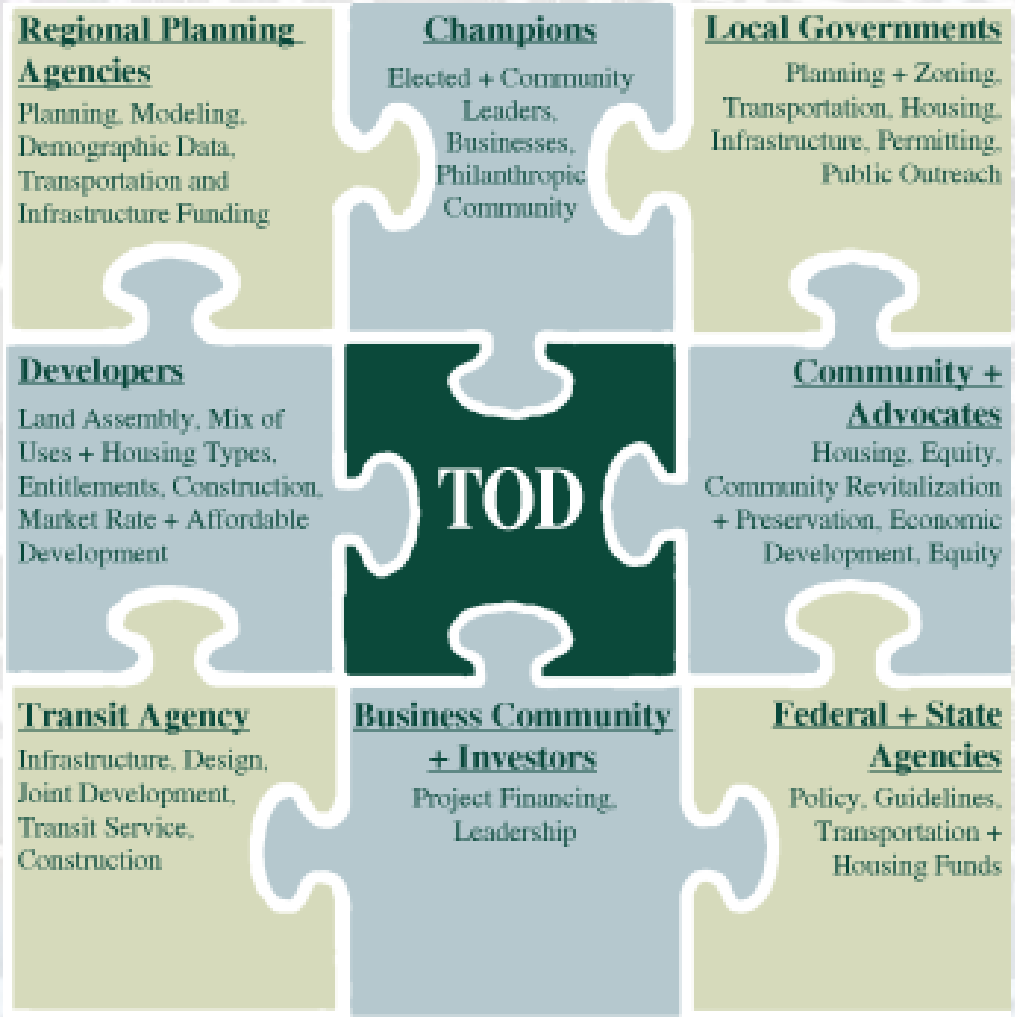
Broad, Collaborative Process and Grassroots Buy-In Are Key



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Union Station, Meridian, Mississippi
A Case Study in Revitalization

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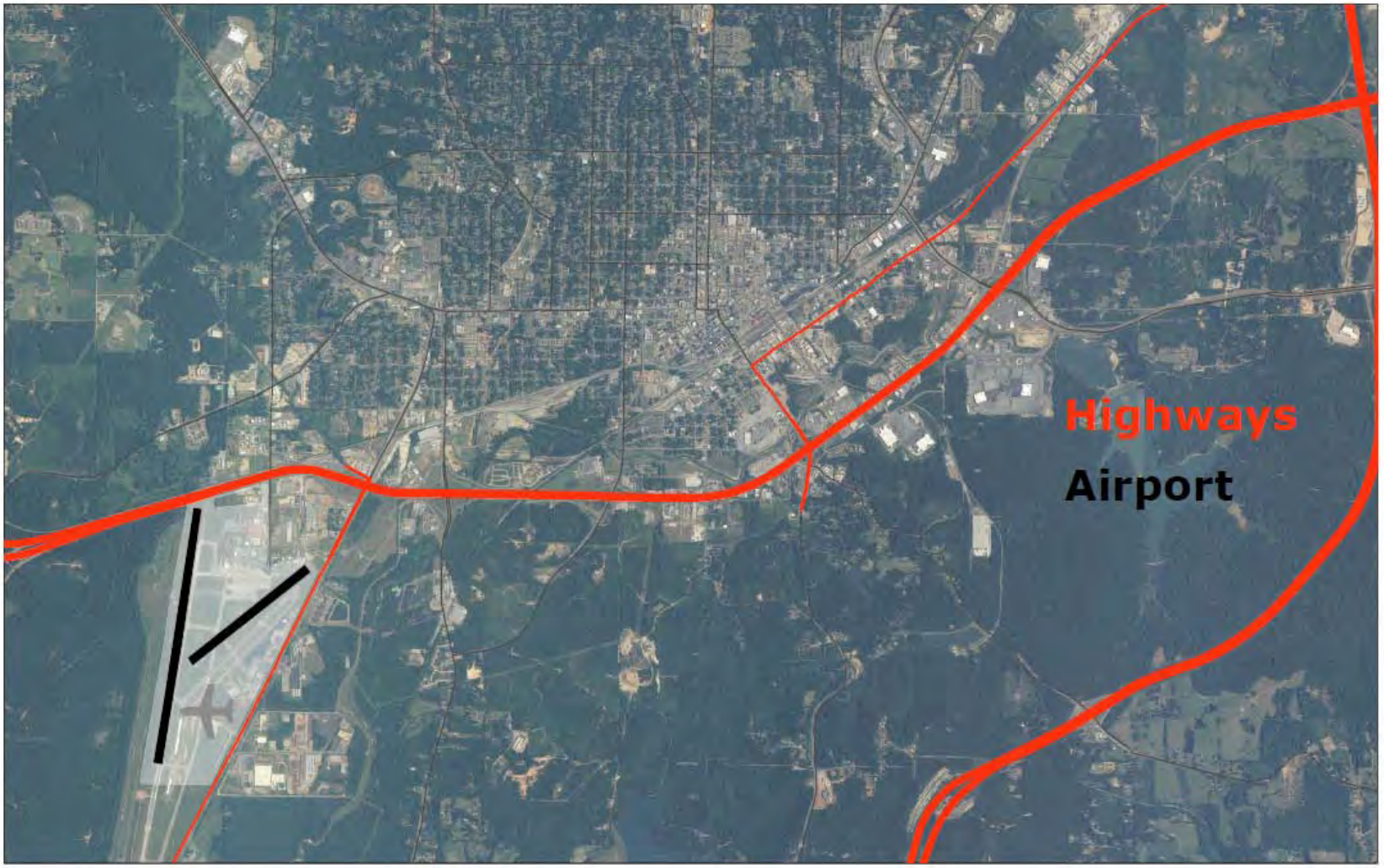
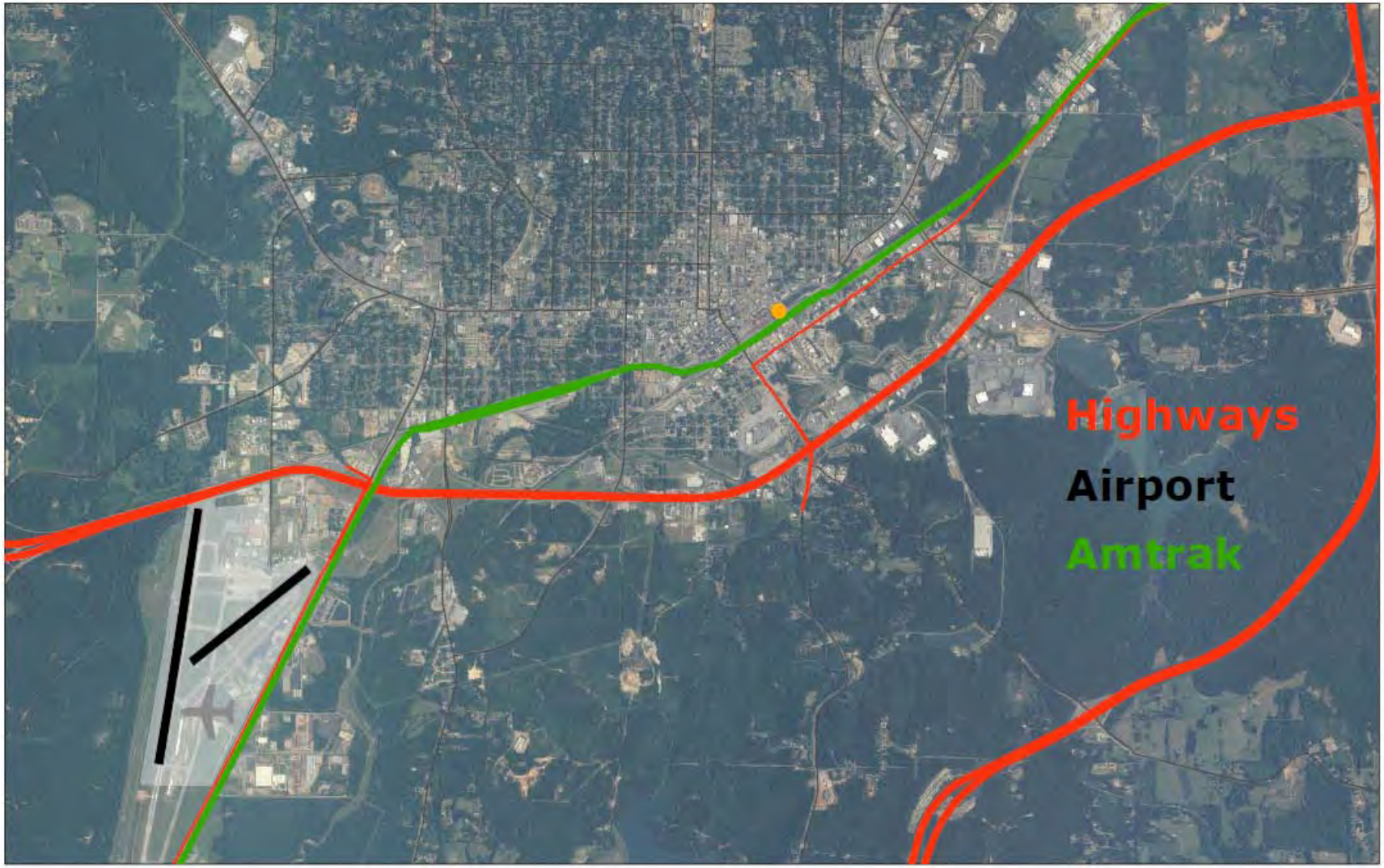
It’s All About Location…


Highways
Airport


Highways
Airport
Amtrak

Your Identity is Key

In any public project you need to know your community:

Who You Were in the Past

"Meridian, with its depots, store-houses, arsenal, hospitals, offices, hotels, and cantonments no longer exists."

General William Tecumseh Sherman
February, 1864

Who You Are Now

Who You Aspire to Be

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You need the Vision to Inspire the Community

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Making the 'Impossible' POSSIBLE

Restoring Public Confidence

- Previous Meridian projects all faced challenges—both internally and externally
  - Lack of confidence
  - Lack of infrastructure
  - Lack of creative financing
  - Lack of partnerships
  - Lack of design creativity

- A "can't do" mentality won't succeed!

Successful Community Development Takes Partners

Union Station, Meridian, Mississippi

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Funding Union Station Development

STATE/FEDERAL FUNDING

$2,544,960 (MDOT)	ISTEA Enhancement Grant
971,040 (MDOT)	Supplemental Grant
640,571	STIP Grant Transfer
290,281	STP-93
+ 700,000 (MDOT)	Supplemental Grant
$5,146,852	Federal/State Contribution

+ LOCAL FUNDING

$1,046,140

+ PREPAID LEASES

$431,000

= TOTAL PROJECT COST

$6,623,992

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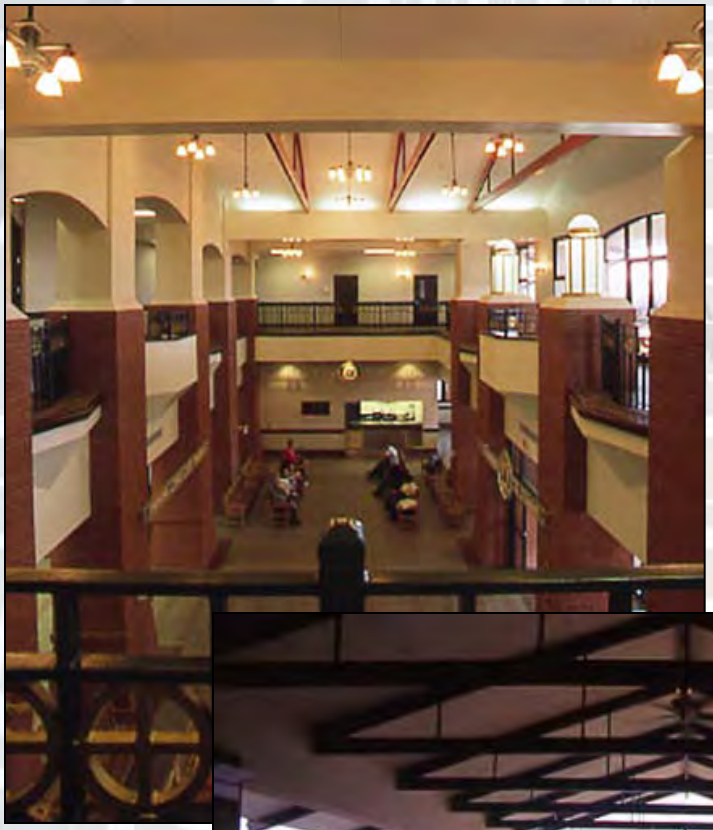
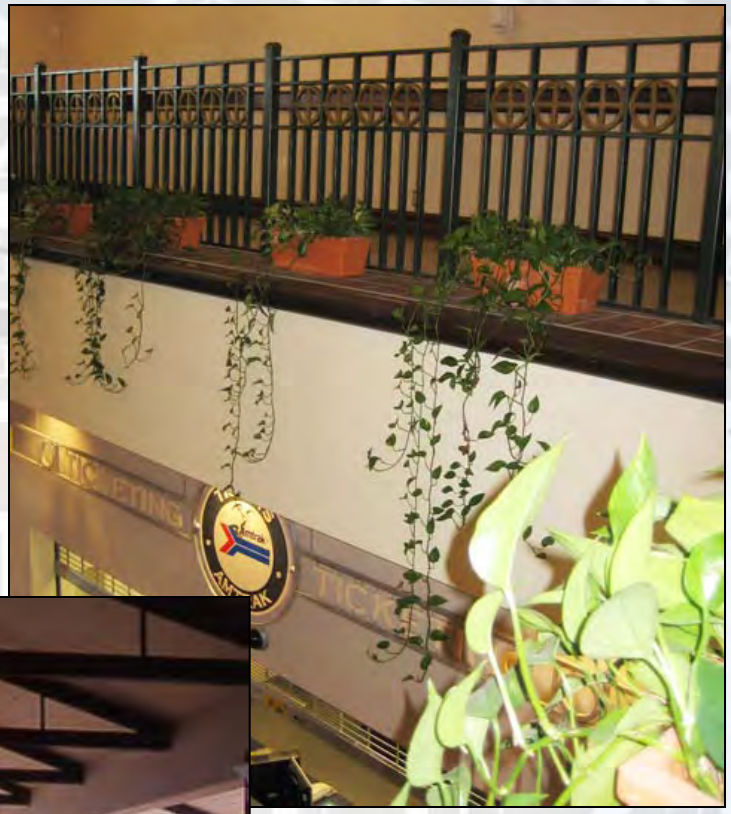
Retain Your Community's History During Renovation

Quality Design is Critical





Union Station at Completion

- Annually, Union Station hosts 250 events and 300,000 people

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Union Station Development Resulted in:

- Private development of $135 million in surrounding area
- “Facelifts” for historic structures

Led to a restored City Hall

(photo credits: The Meridian Star)

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Inspired a new Fire Station

Dumont Plaza

Photo by David Barr

A gathering place for the community

A new Union Station helped bring about:

- MSU Riley Center, a state-of-the-art performing and conference facility

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World Class Performances

50th Anniversary with Itzhak Perlman

Guests such as the Soweto Gospel Choir

and Wynton Marsalis

It also brought about housing improvements

- $17.3 million in HUD HOPE VI grants for development of attractive low to middle income duplex and single-family housing

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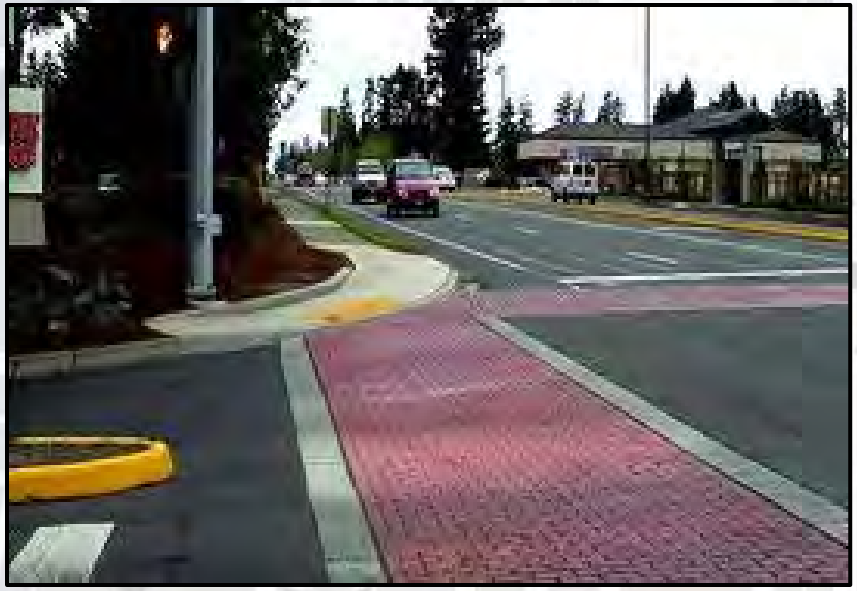

Healthcare Facilities are an Important Part of the Community – Providing Jobs and Services

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Transportation Alternatives are Key

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It is critical to engage for future generations…

…what we are doing will directly affect their future.

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Thank you!

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