

TOD – Perspective from outside the Development

Cheryl “Charlie” Busch
President, WWPNA
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What am I doing here?

- ❖ Member of TOD citizens group for 4½ years
- ❖ Rep to another TOD planning effort
- ❖ My home is less than ¼ mile to Light Rail, Cherokee and Lionstone.
 - Please note my opinions tonight are my own and not necessarily representative of WWPNA.

My Background in Transit

- ❖ Studying Transit for 21 years
- ❖ Small town : auto = freedom
- ❖ Junior year abroad in Great Britain and Europe – extensive travel by rail
- ❖ Moved to Washington D.C. - 1987
 - Buildings limited in size
 - Lots of free/cheap things to do
 - ***Public Transit – Metro & bus***

Heavy transit rider - 10 years

- ❖ Consultant – assignments changed every 3-6 months, all over D.C. area
- ❖ Constant study of “easiest, quickest” ways to destinations
 - Roommate without car after auto theft
- ❖ Always lived within ½ mile of Metro
 - Single Family Home – ½ mile from M
 - Town home – ¼ mile from M / parking
 - Apartment – blocks from Kiss and Ride

1997 - Moved to Denver

- ❖ Couldn't afford anything in D.C. within ½ mile of Metro – most "close-in" stations have no parking
- ❖ Purchased home as close to last Light Rail station (I-25 & Bway) as I could on a quiet, residential street
- ❖ Used Light Rail to commute to downtown Denver for 3 years, then for pleasure purposes for 7 years

How I see myself

- ❖ Experienced Transit Rider
 - 20 year transit rider for commuting, business appointments, and pleasure
- ❖ Small homeowner – largest asset
 - Quiet Residential street
 - Area of Stability – Blue Print Denver
 - Will not be a TOD resident
- ❖ Opinionated, but educate myself, willing to learn and be persuaded

My role in TOD development

- ❖ Assure TOD integrates with nearby neighborhoods without overwhelming them with traffic, lights, and noise
- ❖ Assure transit is available to ALL Denver Metro residents – continual expansion of public transit
- ❖ Try to affect the overall process while preserving my home and the character of my neighborhood

3 Major players in successful TOD

- ❖ City / RTD / Government
 - Planning, traffic patterns, transit options
 - Relationship with communities
- ❖ Developers / Future Residents
 - Relationship with nearby communities
- ❖ Surrounding Communities
 - Relationship with both government agencies and Developer

My beliefs on TOD and Transit

- ❖ Transit must be available and accessible to ALL Denver residents
 - Transit stations should not be a publicly supported amenity available only to TOD residents
- ❖ Successful TOD planning and/or development requires all 3 players
- ❖ Planning for TODs should assure nearby communities are not the "road kill" of the development

TOD from a Community perspective – the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

TOD – the Good

- ❖ TOD station area planning
 - Good step for future TODs
 - Questions remain on Traffic Planning
- ❖ Developer #1 (I-25 & Bway)
 - Gold Standard of developers creating relationships with residents
 - Worked through major issues of groundwater pollution and noise issues with area residents

TOD – the Bad

- ❖ Developer #2 – different experience
 - Meetings with neighbors had to be “encouraged” by Council Rep
- ❖ City not engaged with residents
 - Residents could not get answers from City Rep. Mistakes perpetuated
- ❖ Traffic Retrofit around I-25 & Bway
 - Engineers turning residential streets into major traffic thoroughfares - devastation for small family homes

TOD – the really Ugly

- ❖ University Station – hostile TOD
 - Not one of the “planning” stations (?)
 - Land not owned by the developer or even one entity
 - Major developer, friends “high places”
 - DU withdrew support over a year ago
 - Removing future RTD parking
 - Both RNOs vehemently oppose
 - Has full support of City and Planning

My own conclusions

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- ❖ TOD is a recent phenomenon
 - Promoted heavily by developers
 - I not convinced it will sustain transit in the Long Term
- ❖ Communities must be vigilant
 - When the City favors developers, neighborhoods must protect themselves
- ❖ TOD should not serve up existing stable neighborhoods like “steak on a platter” for redevelopment

My own conclusions

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- ❖ TODs should pay for infrastructure improvements, not leach from residents in stable neighborhoods
- ❖ TOD development must be directed to areas of change, not serve as impetus of unwarranted development in areas of stability