

# Transit Oriented Development and Proposition 207 in Metropolitan Phoenix

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# TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT AND PROPOSITION 207 IN METROPOLITAN PHOENIX

In 2007, the city of Phoenix and its partners, Valley Metro Rail and the city of Mesa sought policy analysis assistance to address how to promote transit-oriented development (TOD) along its newly opened light rail and future extensions given the impact of the passage of Proposition 207 (Private Property Rights Protection Act). Over the course of the past 24 months, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) lead a group of national experts to help the local team and its supporters including the Local Initiative Support Corporation and the Sonoran Institute develop options for encouraging transit oriented development while addressing Proposition 207.

The project evolved into a discussion of the most appropriate tools and incentives that localities can use to promote TOD. Five documents were developed as the team's analysis for this project, each covering some specific aspect and nuance of these tools and how they will be utilized.

These documents include:

## Developing a Policy Toolbox for the Post-Proposition 207 Environment: Transit Oriented Development in Phoenix and Mesa

This document serves as the initial “thought piece” for organizing ideas for this project. At the beginning of the Smart Growth Implementation Assistance project, this document was written to frame the issues and provide some perspective about scope of the work. Since the document was meant to serve a purpose early in the process, it was updated to reflect feedback throughout the project, but it was not completely rewritten at the end of the project.

## Strategic Package of Tools to Promote Transit Oriented Development in Metropolitan Phoenix

This document serves a comprehensive summary of the tools that are available and encouraged for use in metropolitan Phoenix to promote transit-oriented development. The document is structured as a matrix in which tools are described and then evaluated against local conditions as well as assessed for their viability in communities around the country. Of all of the documents, this one can best stand alone and serve a broader audience.

## Encouraging Transit Oriented Development: Case Studies that Work

As part of their input into this project, Reconnecting America authored a series of short case studies of TOD tools that have been highlighted in the project. The aim is to describe in some detail a select number of tools and show how each have been used in various cities and settings. Creating these cases, gives readers a tangible account of how and to what degree these tools function and work.

## Impact of TOD and Smart Growth Incentives on Development in Phoenix

This document features an analysis of the fiscal impact of development around transit. The most important consideration here is that this analysis was done as a snapshot – in the spring of 2009 – during a low point in the housing and commercial development market. This fact is noted; yet,

the lessons and results of the analysis transcend this point in time and can be used as a measure for additional analysis.

### Next Steps to Promote Transit-Oriented Development in Metropolitan Phoenix

The purpose of this document is to highlight themes and strategies that elected officials and city staff can consider as next steps for implementation of strategies to promote transit-oriented development. This document does not serve as an executive summary of the entire project, but rather an attempt to take the results of the work and project it into action items and steps for application.

These documents are meant to be used as a whole to create a complete picture of addressing TOD in Phoenix, but because of the distinct nature of the individual information presented, each are also intended to stand alone as a resource.

In April 2009, the US EPA group conducted a 4 day site visit in Phoenix. The site visit consisted of presenting ideas and findings related to the documents described above. Key meetings during the site visit included a presentation to the Phoenix city council, a training session with staff from Phoenix, Mesa and other municipalities interested in the this project as well as a half-day symposium with local developers and property owners. Of the five documents listed above, drafts of the first four (not including Next Steps to Promote Transit-Oriented Development in Metropolitan Phoenix) were presented. The Next Steps document was written as a response to the work that occurred and serves as a summary of the options for implementation.

Questions about this project can be directed to Kevin Nelson, US EPA, [nelson.kevin@epa.gov](mailto:nelson.kevin@epa.gov), 202-566-2835.

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