

CRCOG Anchor Institution Convening

November 8, 2016

Summary of Participant Feedback

The following notes reflect the consolidated feedback received from the stakeholders gathered at the Anchor Institution convenings in Hartford and New Britain, Connecticut on October 28, 2016. Participants provided feedback during the discussion period following the presentations of the Case Studies of the Best Practices for Engaging Anchor Institutions in Catalyzing Transit Oriented Development on the CTfastrak Corridor. This discussion centered around a few of the themes illustrated in the presentation, asking participants to assess their own organization's activities and mission related to spurring transit-oriented development.

Vision

What are your short-and long-term organizational priorities? What development activities would help you realize these priorities? How can TOD support these goals?

Hartford

- **Health care institutions** have a patient base in Hartford, but are now focused on regional growth opportunities to remain sustainable. This will play out in how institutions allocate their resources: for example, hospitals may provide more outpatient clinics in municipalities and neighborhoods outside the Corridor.
- There is a need for more **locally-based neighborhood and commercial revitalization** in targeted TOD areas in between the two successful urban cores of Hartford and West Hartford, such as along Sigourney Street or Parkville.
- **Promoting commercial development** remains a core priority.
- There needs to be a **balance between serving suburban drivers and pedestrian-oriented millennials**. People need the option to leave cars in structured parking and access amenities along the Corridor.
- Outcomes and benefits should be distributed along the Corridor to advance a Corridor-wide identity, recognizing that **neighborhoods and areas have unique cultures and assets**.
- Need to tie together assets and characteristics from individual station areas in a way that can **create downtowns throughout the Corridor**.
- **Reasonably-priced housing** as part of TOD is necessary, particularly with greater density with choices across price and tenure.

New Britain

- Need to move towards an environment where **market-rate housing is viable** in Downtown New Britain.
- It is important that key development sites are occupied by the type and mix of uses that **leverage the TOD potential** for the area and catalyze future economic activity.
- A **livable downtown** should be created to attract millennials.
- The University's primary focus is **increasing enrollment**, as well as providing better accessibility and amenities to **attract and retain students and faculty**.
- **Affordable housing** for University faculty as well as health care workers is needed with options to support longer-term tenure as these populations grow and move through their career.

Community involvement

What community stakeholders do you engage with? What stakeholders are missing from these discussions?

Hartford

- **Engagement should be proactive** to facilitate discussions about development opportunities before there are defined proposals.
- Communities should be **involved in transit planning**; there are efforts currently in early stages such as the Transit Academy.
- There have been multiple avenues for involvement and discussion in recent years through different initiatives, with different levels of attention, but there has been a **lack of coordination**.
- **Outreach should be coordinated** across similar efforts to maximize impact and reach broad stakeholders.
 - Need to identify opportunities where other stakeholders and anchors can commit financial and other resources to put “skin in the game.”
 - Private organizations can support workforce training and demonstrate investment in the communities they serve.
- **Small businesses should be engaged**, including the landlords and small businesses located in commercial areas.

Public Investment

What are the barriers to realizing your organizational priorities? What public intervention(s) could facilitate action?

Hartford

- A **neutral convener is not needed**; rather, an active anchor institution-led involvement should engage with government to establish a shared vision that attracts investment.
- A **broader outreach process** is needed that builds support on a longer scale beyond political terms.
- There is a need to meet **market trends of the future workforce** with a focus on skills growth that can support and fill needs in growing industries.

New Britain

- **Public streetscape and public realm investments** have begun to improve the pedestrian experience.
- **Improved connections between employment and housing** is needed. Expanding industries have specific needs that could be studied to position the region to attract and retain the next generation of employees/faculty from anchors.
- **Scalable incentives** are needed that can function as mortgage insurance policy to investors.