

# Transit Oriented Communities (HB 1490/SB 5687)

Washingtonian families want to live in affordable, walkable communities connected by frequent, reliable transit. Transit Oriented Communities empowers cities and communities to increase livability, provide more transit options and give families opportunities to save money.

Transit Oriented Communities will:

- **Create Transit Oriented Development (TOD).** Walkable, bike friendly TOD around light rail and commuter rail stations in the state will create healthier and more livable communities with real transportation choices.
- **Provide affordable housing near frequent transit.** Housing for working families in livable communities with frequent, reliable transit options will help save money and give people choices.
- **Add climate change considerations to local land-use and transportation planning.** Provide the tools and resources for cities, counties and urban regions to plan greenhouse gas emissions reductions and adopt measures to increase walking, biking, and transit use.

## THE BENEFITS

### ***Save some green - cash in your wallet and a cleaner, greener planet***

- Transit Oriented Communities increases neighborhood access to more transportation choices like walking, biking, buses or trains – protecting residents from spiking fuel prices.
- It protects our climate and environment by keeping cars off the road and harmful pollution out of our air and water.

### ***Improve your quality of life - less time in your car; safer, more livable communities***

- On average we spend one work week each year stuck in traffic. Transit Oriented Communities allow people to spend more time doing the things they want and less time in traffic getting to work or running errands.
- Sidewalks, bike paths and walkways created in Transit Oriented Communities make for safe neighborhoods and provide families with alternatives to driving.

### ***Affordable housing near transit for working families***

- Neighborhoods near transit centers will consist of all types of mixed income housing that would help keep people in the city and near transit – not push them out.
- The bill has provisions to set aside housing for families earning less than the area median income in those mixed-income neighborhoods. Transit centers will have a mix of apartments, condos and single family homes for sale and for rent. It should be possible for working people to afford housing and still have enough money for the basics like groceries and child care.



Images courtesy: GGLO and Urban Advantage



Image courtesy: Oran Viriyincy



- Growth and development will occur around transit hubs, with or without this legislation. Under the protections in the bill, if low-income housing is lost due to development, replacement of those units is required and the families impacted will receive appropriate advance notification and financial support to move.
- Everyone should have the opportunity to live in a safe, decent, affordable home. The bill creates new housing for low and moderate income working families which is unlikely to be included in new developments otherwise.

### ***Keep it local***

- Cities and communities create design guidelines for future development in transit station areas. There is no cookie cutter approach.
- Cities designated as “growth centers” will have the flexibility to meet either the residential density goal of 50 dwelling units per net acre or employment density goal of 50 jobs per acre or a mix of both around light rail and commuter rail stations.
- Each neighborhood and city will be able to choose their own way to meet the housing goals, using an appropriate mix of single-family, low-rise and mid-rise structures in a way that meets the community’s character and values.
- This bill does not change the existing neighborhood planning process.
- Transit Oriented Communities has no impact on existing development.

### ***Creating parks and green spaces***

- The bill requires that cities to plan for parks and recreational spaces around station areas to make communities more livable for those who live and work there.

### ***Planning for the region’s future***

- Western Washington is growing with 1.6 million more people expected to move to the Puget Sound over the next 30 years. To temper sprawl and the traffic jams, smog and public costs associated with it, we must act now to prepare cities in our region to accommodate new residents and new jobs.
- Creating communities to take full advantage of existing and future transit will help manage this growth. The increased tax base that new residents provide will help to pay for maintenance and any necessary upgrades to our infrastructure.

### **Puget Sound Regional Council Growth Centers**

Auburn  
 Bellevue (downtown, Overlake)  
 Everett  
 Federal Way  
 Kent  
 Lakewood  
 Lynnwood  
 Puyallup  
 Redmond  
 SeaTac  
 Seattle (Capitol Hill, Downtown, University, Northgate)  
 Tacoma (downtown)  
 Tukwila

**Have more questions about the bill? Ask us.**

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