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**Transit-Oriented Communities Spark Interest across the State**

Futurewise Launches *Transit-Oriented Communities Program* to Promote Smart Growth in Washington

**SEATTLE** (January 26, 2010)—Futurewise has launched the *Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) Program* to encourage more housing and transportation choices for Washingtonians. The program advances vibrant and healthy neighborhoods through a comprehensive report and action plan, a travelling gallery exhibit, and two years of community meetings across the state to promote smart growth near transit.

“There is a real desire to improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods by providing better access to walking, biking and transit, and more affordable housing options. We see this in current discussions on rail alignments in Bellevue, parking in Seattle station areas, and transit-funding initiatives across the state,” said Sara Nikolic, Co-Director for Futurewise. “We hope our TOC program can help inform these policy discussions.”

The program is anchored by a comprehensive publication, “Transit-Oriented Communities: A Blueprint for Washington State,” co-authored by statewide non-profit organizations Futurewise and Transportation Choices Coalition and integrated design firm, GGLO. The publication presents an image-rich vision of TOC, provides research linking TOC patterns to numerous social and environmental benefits, analyzes station areas in the central Puget Sound, and lays out policy actions from the local to federal level to encourage more TOC patterns.

Alan Grainger, founding principal of GGLO, said, “Our transit networks will ultimately catalyze new development in station areas. People will choose these places to live, work and play—but only if they are places that people love. For this to happen, visionary

planning and design must go hand-in-hand with smart policies and attention to the unique qualities of each community.”

Evidence links TOC patterns to greater physical health, lower household expenses, and greater environmental protection. “The by-products of auto-dependent sprawl are pollution, wastefulness, ill-health and a breakdown of community,” said Peter Steinbrueck, former Seattle City Council Member and founding board member of Futurewise. “The vision of Transit-Oriented Communities shows us a better way.”

In 2010, the TOC Program will include extensive distribution of the *TOC Blueprint* publication to policy makers, planners and community members across the state. An accompanying gallery exhibit will travel through Seattle, Spokane and Tacoma. Quarterly educational brown bag meetings will take place through the central Puget Sound region, as well as town hall events in Spokane, Bellingham, Everett and Tacoma. In addition, Futurewise will provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions looking to include TOC principles in their land use and transportation plans.

For more information on Futurewise’s TOC Program, including an online version of the *TOC Blueprint*, please visit [www.futurewise.org/toc](http://www.futurewise.org/toc).

Founded in 1990, Futurewise is a statewide 501(c)3 organization that has protected over a million acres of farm and forestland from irresponsible overdevelopment, significantly improved Washington’s transportation choices, and helped make our communities more attractive for children and families. Our organizing, advocacy, public education, and legal programs have become the foundation of good growth management in Washington.

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