

# The Purple Line Equitable Development Strategy

Nick Finio, PhD

Associate Director, National Center for Smart Growth  
Purple Line Corridor Coalition, University of Maryland

TPB Regional Public Transportation Subcommittee  
7.25.23



# Background

- The National Center for Smart Growth is a research center in the School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation at the University of Maryland, College Park. We have been working to create a more vibrant, equitable region since the year 2000.
- The Purple Line Corridor Coalition was founded in 2013 to build a more equitable Corridor “beyond the tracks.” It is headquartered at the NCSG, and directed by Sheila Somashekhar.
- Both NCSG and PLCC are funded by the Maryland State Government, grants and contracts with all levels of government, and foundations.



# Overview: FTA TOD Planning Grant



## Project Goals:

- Complement the substantial financial investment, and ongoing planning efforts, in the Purple Line Corridor with technical analysis
- Study various types of enhancements to supportive infrastructure, community planning, and land use policies that will maximize transit ridership
- Improve access to jobs and essential services
- Encourage new economic development and TOD that will benefit residents and businesses in the corridor as well as the surrounding region

## 1. Timeline

- a. Awarded late 2018
- b. Work completed Summer 2020 - Fall 2022

## 2. Work products

- a. Formalize/Expand Multi-stakeholder Collaborative for Coordination, Engagement and Monitoring
- b. Corridor–Wide Multi-Mobility and TOD Assessment
- c. Economic Development Assessment and Business Preservation Strategy
- d. TOD Finance and Implementation Recommendations

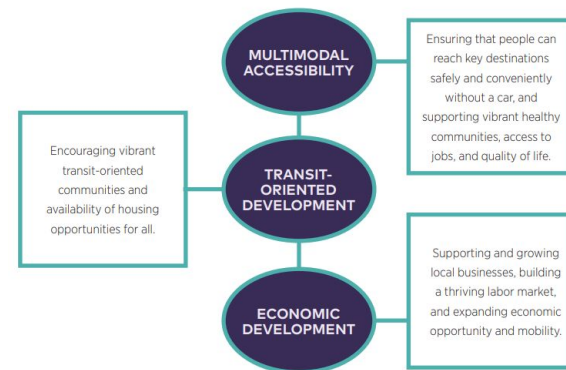


# The Final Product - The ETOD Strategy



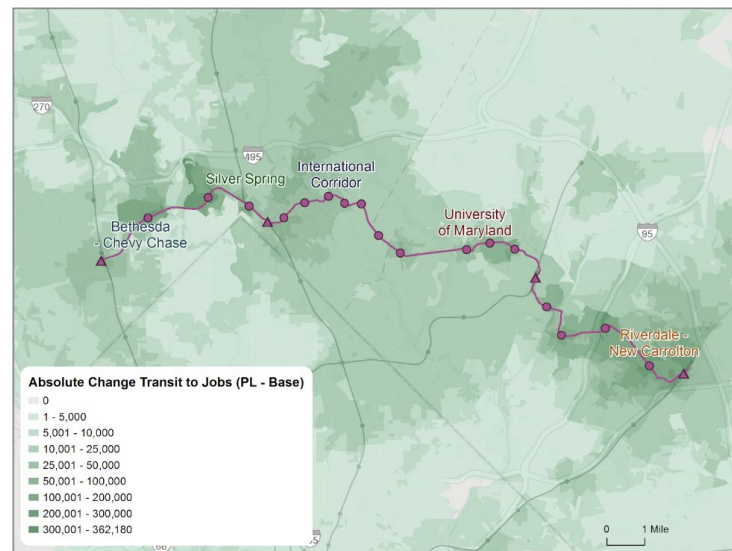
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA)</li> <li>Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning (Montgomery and Prince George's Counties)</li> <li>Montgomery County</li> <li>Prince George's County</li> </ul>
PLCC STEERING COMMITTEE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Center for Smart Growth, UMD</li> <li>Enterprise Community Partners</li> <li>Montgomery County Executive office</li> <li>Prince George's County Executive office</li> <li>Prince George's Planning Department</li> <li>Montgomery Planning Department</li> <li>CASA</li> <li>Montgomery Housing Partnership</li> <li>Housing Initiative Partnership</li> <li>Latino Economic Development Center</li> <li>Purple Line NOW</li> <li>Kaiser Permanente</li> <li>Prince George's County Councilmember Dannielle Glaros</li> <li>Montgomery County Council Member Evan Glass</li> </ul>

## Three broad strategies for ETOD:



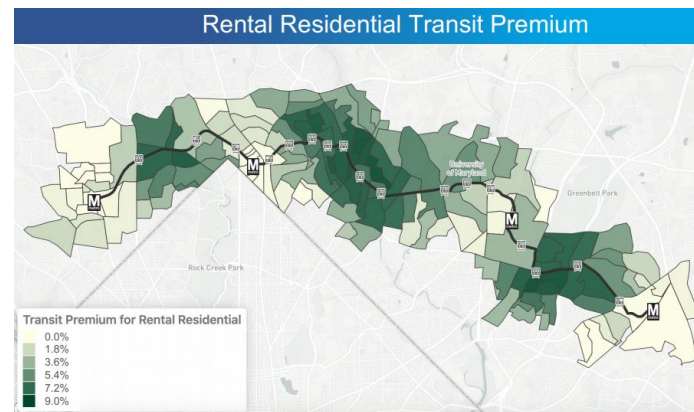
# Multimobility Strategies

- Reduce stress for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Coordinate and expand bus service
- Optimize Purple Line Service (headways, fares)
- Improve bike routes



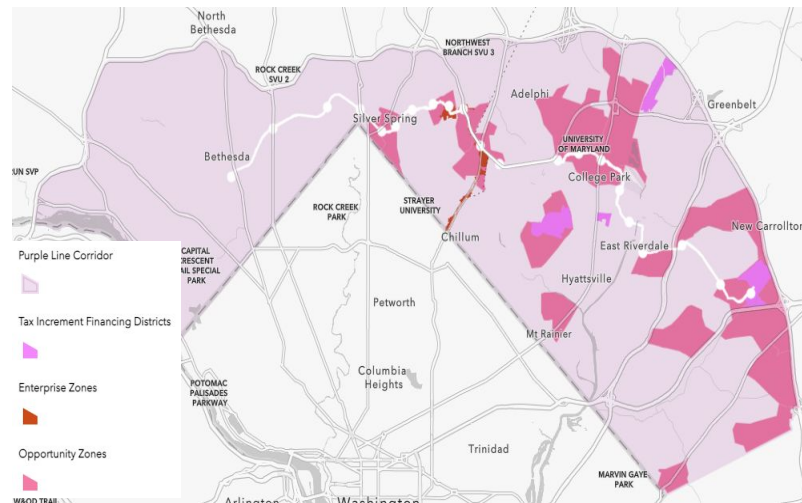
# TOD Strategies

- Expand affordable housing resources
- Leverage market rate development to deliver affordable housing
- Protect low income tenants
- Increase density near transit
- Increase housing choice near PL stations



# Economic Development Strategies

- Protect existing small businesses
- Attract and grow new small businesses
- Grow industry clusters
- Enhance resident skills
- Address barriers to job placement



## Challenges

- The current interest rate and market environment have slowed down real estate investment, particularly in affordable housing
- Construction on the Purple Line has been delayed, with a new target date of Spring 2027; this delays many positive impacts for area residents
- PLCC is not an implementing body
  - however, we are providing a collaborative space for progress and coordination that would not otherwise exist

## Successes

- Strong commitments to affordable housing from both County governments
  - more than halfway toward goal of preserving/producing 17,000 affordable units at 60% AMI (thanks MWCOG!)
  - Commitments to PLCC [Housing Accelerator Action Team](#) are growing
- Successful grants for pedestrian, trail improvements to both counties
- Successful coordination of support to small businesses, including addressing construction disruption and supporting adaptation to change
  - more than 200 businesses have received TA or support
  - new main streets and CDBG funding in Montgomery and PG
- Award of new, follow up TOD planning grant



# Academic Research

Special Issue: - Kieran Donaghy

## Do Multifamily unit Rents Increase in Response to Light Rail in the Pre-service Period?


Qiong Peng<sup>1</sup>, Gerrit-Jan Knaap<sup>1</sup> , and Nicholas Finio<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

The effects of transit investments on land and housing values are a longstanding topic of interest in part because the nature and timing of those effects are important for designing anti-displacement and land value capture strategies. For these reasons, we explore whether multifamily unit rents have increased in planned station areas before the Purple Line light rail project in Maryland is operational. We employ a difference-in-difference (DID) approach to explore this question and validate the DID results with a first difference approach. We find that rents for units located within one-half mile of anticipated stations did increase well before transit service is expected to begin, but only for units with two or more bedrooms. We suggest these results imply that anti-displacement and land value capture strategies are warranted and potentially viable, but to be effective they need to be adopted well before transit service begins. Further, our results suggest that in the case of the Purple Line in Maryland, such policies should focus on units located within one-half mile of proposed stations and concentrate on providing affordable units with two or more bedrooms.


### Keywords

light rail transit, housing, Washington metropolitan area, multifamily rent, displacement

International Regional Science Review  
2023, Vol. 0(0) 1–25  
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DOI: 10.1177/01600176231162563  
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Planning Research

## Gentrification and Business Closures in Maryland's Purple Line Corridor

Nicholas Finio<sup>1</sup> 

### Abstract

The State of Maryland is investing in a new light rail line, the Purple Line, in the suburbs of Washington, DC. Whether or not the corridor it travels through is gentrifying is unknown, as are the impacts of both the construction and neighborhood gentrification on the local economy. In this paper, census data are used to identify neighborhood gentrification along the rail line. With a novel data source, employment, wages, and firm closures are tracked and analyzed. Even in advance of completion of the light rail line, much of the Purple Line Corridor is gentrifying, and impacts to businesses are potentially significant.

### Keywords

gentrification, small business, light rail, displacement



Journal of Planning Education and Research  
1–14  
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DOI: 10.1177/0739456X231187119  
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## Looking ahead + Call to Action

- Newly executed follow up TOD planning grant, which will have a more community-led focus
  - plan for redeveloping commercial strip malls equitably
  - affordable housing pipeline development
  - planning for multimobility improvements
  - coordination between TOD plans and local climate goals
- Continued advocacy for affordable housing preservation and production
  - new, updated housing action plan to be released soon
- The delay in the Purple Line gives us more time to reach our goals
  - we're attracting more interest and capacity
  - backbone support, capital for implementation, operating support for members all increasing

Thank you!



Nick Finio  
[nfinio@umd.edu](mailto:nfinio@umd.edu)

[www.purplelinecorridor.org](http://www.purplelinecorridor.org)

[www.umdsmartgrowth.org](http://www.umdsmartgrowth.org)