Social Sustainability, Development & Transit: Lessons from Baltimore

Henry Kay • Baltimore Transit Alliance
Transit and Development in Baltimore

- 45 miles of rail built between 1983 and 1995
- TOD: more misses than hits
- Successes usually rely on aggressive public sector management
- New lines offer opportunity get it right
Case Study 1: West Baltimore

- Existing commuter rail station; proposed Red Line station
- Terminus of truncated freeway completed in 1976
- High visibility development opportunity
Station Area an Opportunity
Wicked Ditch of the West
## Concentrated Poverty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Station Area</th>
<th>Baltimore City</th>
<th>Maryland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Non-White</td>
<td>97.4</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Under 17 and Over 65</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Households Earning Less than $25K</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Residential Sale Price (2003)</td>
<td>$54,000</td>
<td>$81,000</td>
<td>$180,000 (Baltimore region)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Using Transit to Get to Work</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community Perspectives

- 1976 is practically yesterday
- Prior history of blockbusting
- Black neighborhoods affected disproportionately
- Threat of condemnation as harmful as condemnation
- Distrust is rampant
- Fragmented community leadership
Approaches

• Accept blame for the past, then start over
• Be patient
• Be honest about motivations
• Cultivate local leadership
• Know that gentrification is a threat even if it’s not
Case Study 2: State Center

- Two rail stations
- State office complex only partially built
- Surrounded by diverse, historic neighborhoods
Urban Renewal Was Here...
…Leaving No Sense of Community
State-led Process Produced Consensus Concept
## Development Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Existing Development State Center &amp; McCulloh</th>
<th>Total Development Eutaw District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>1.2 million sq. ft.</td>
<td>1.2 million sq. ft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>0 sq. ft.</td>
<td>63,000 sq. ft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail, Culture &amp; Entertain.</td>
<td>1000 sq. ft.</td>
<td>571,000 sq. ft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>970 dwelling units</td>
<td>3,100 dwelling units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>0 rooms</td>
<td>200 rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>est. 2,500 spaces</td>
<td>5,500 spaces</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community Perspective

- Bunker mentality
- Stability is fragile
- Public housing tenants lack voice
- History of poor planning; failure to implement
State Center Neighborhoods Alliance

• Goals
  – Affordable housing
  – Support for local schools
  – Minority participation in project
  – Family-oriented retail (not just young urbanites)
  – Increase transit options
  – “…not a new neighborhood, but an enhanced core for existing neighborhoods.”
Approaches

- Provide advocate for public housing tenants
- Formalize organization to provide community voice
- Meet early and often
Conclusions from Baltimore

• History matters more than it should
• Goals not necessarily shared
• Allow time for relationship building
• You are always an insider or an outsider