

Best Practices for Creating Equitable, Sustainable Communities Near Transit

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Reconnecting America

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Overview

- What is Transit-Oriented Development?
- Where is TOD Happening Across the U.S.?
- TOD in Denver
- Mile High Connects
- Affordable Housing & TOD
- Legal Implications of TOD

Who is Reconnecting America?

- Reconnecting America is a national nonprofit that advises civic and community leaders on how to overcome community development challenges to create better communities for all.
- Reconnecting America develops research and innovative public policy, while also building on-the-ground partnerships and convening players needed to accelerate decision-making.

Reconnecting America



- **Technical Assistance:** Creating a national marketplace for TOD, working with cities, transit agencies, developers, investors + communities
- **Policy:** Improving practice through technical assistance, research + policy reform
- **Education:** On-line Clearinghouse of TOD + Transit Best Practices

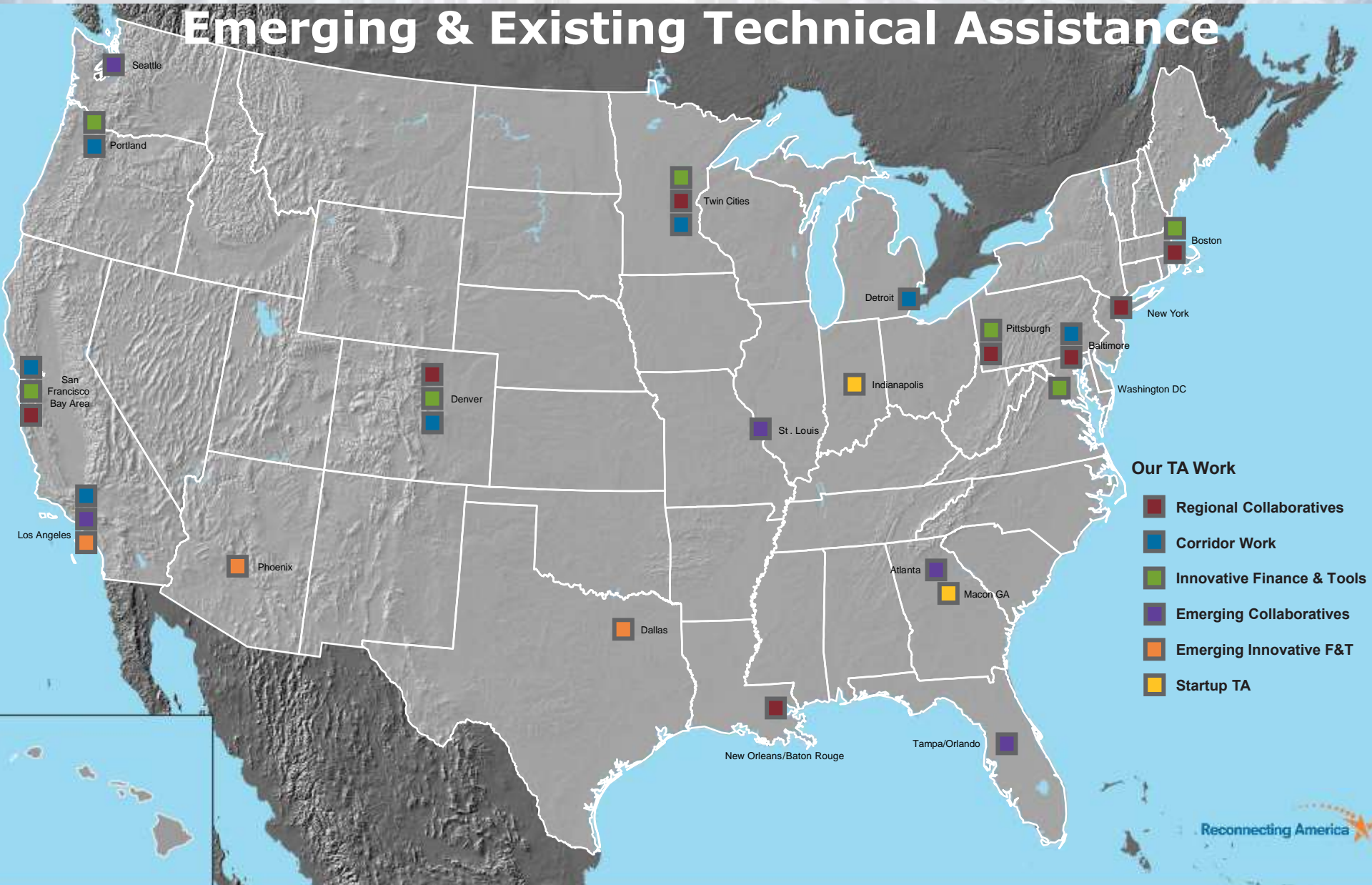


Technical Assistance Activities

- **Regional Collaboratives**— building collaborations from the ground up, providing ongoing technical support, bringing lessons to national forefront
- **Corridor Implementation Planning** – preparing regions to capture community benefits from new transit investments
- **Innovations & Research** – development of innovative financing and implementation tools for transit-oriented development.
- **National Technical Assistance**— sharing best practices and broadly disseminating information to support the field

Where We Are Working

Emerging & Existing Technical Assistance



Transit-Oriented Development (TOD): A Walkable Neighborhood Near High Quality Transit

People within **a half-mile radius** are 5 times as likely to walk to a major transit stop than others.

TOD coordinates investments at the station, corridor, and regional scale to enhance transportation choices.

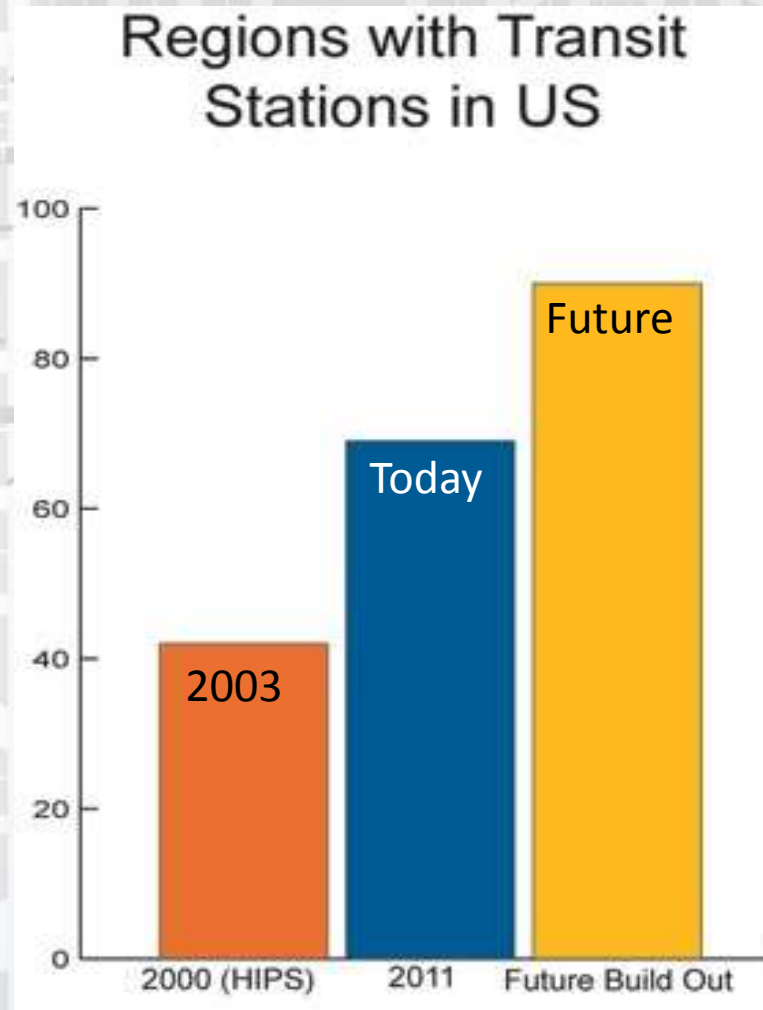


Getting to Equitable TOD

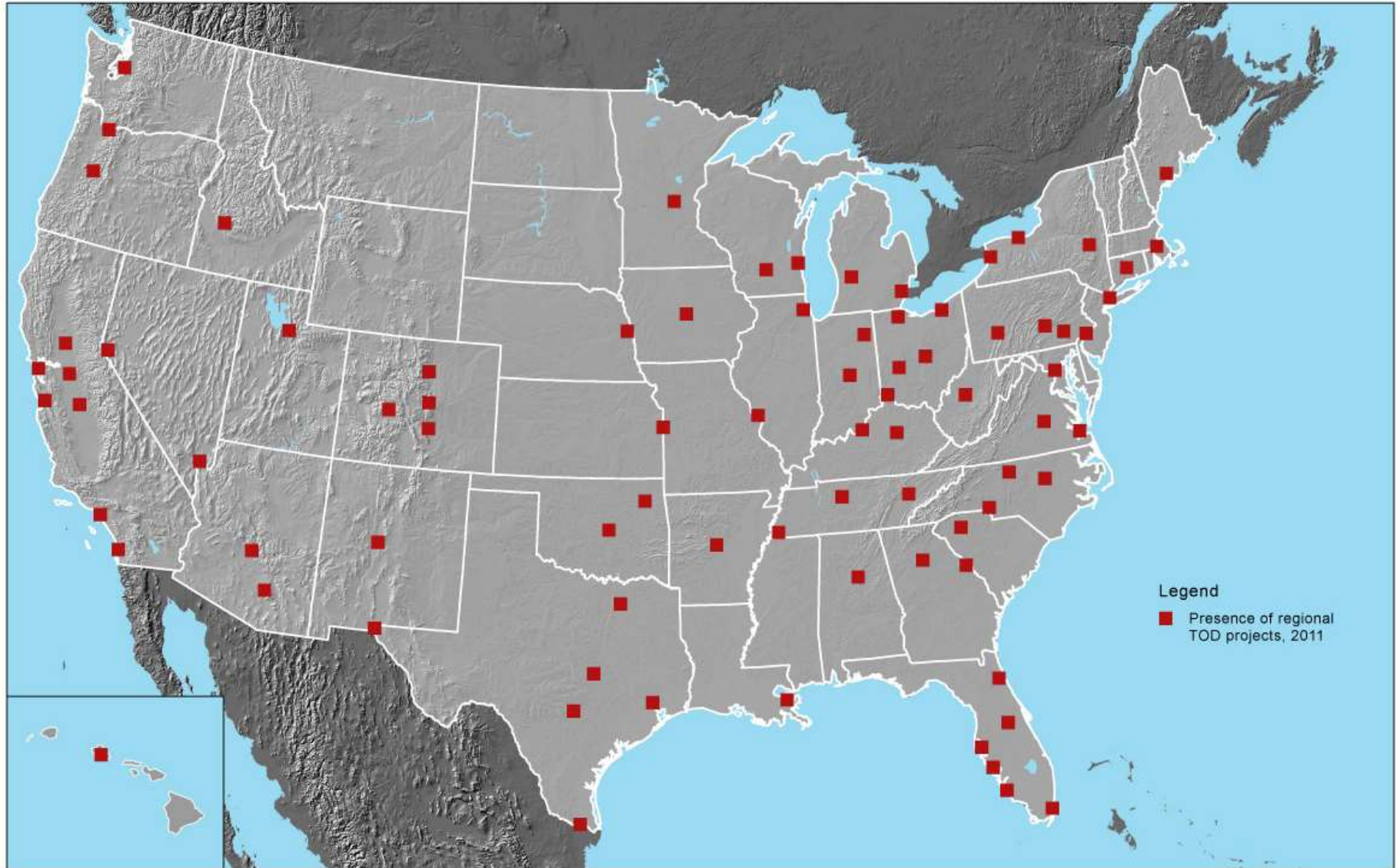
- Inclusive process
- Consider potential impact of transit investment on low and mod-income households
- Improve access to jobs & other destinations, reduce isolation
- Preserve and produce a mix of housing types, for all incomes
- Invest in local amenities
- Design for activity - Add bike lanes and sidewalks



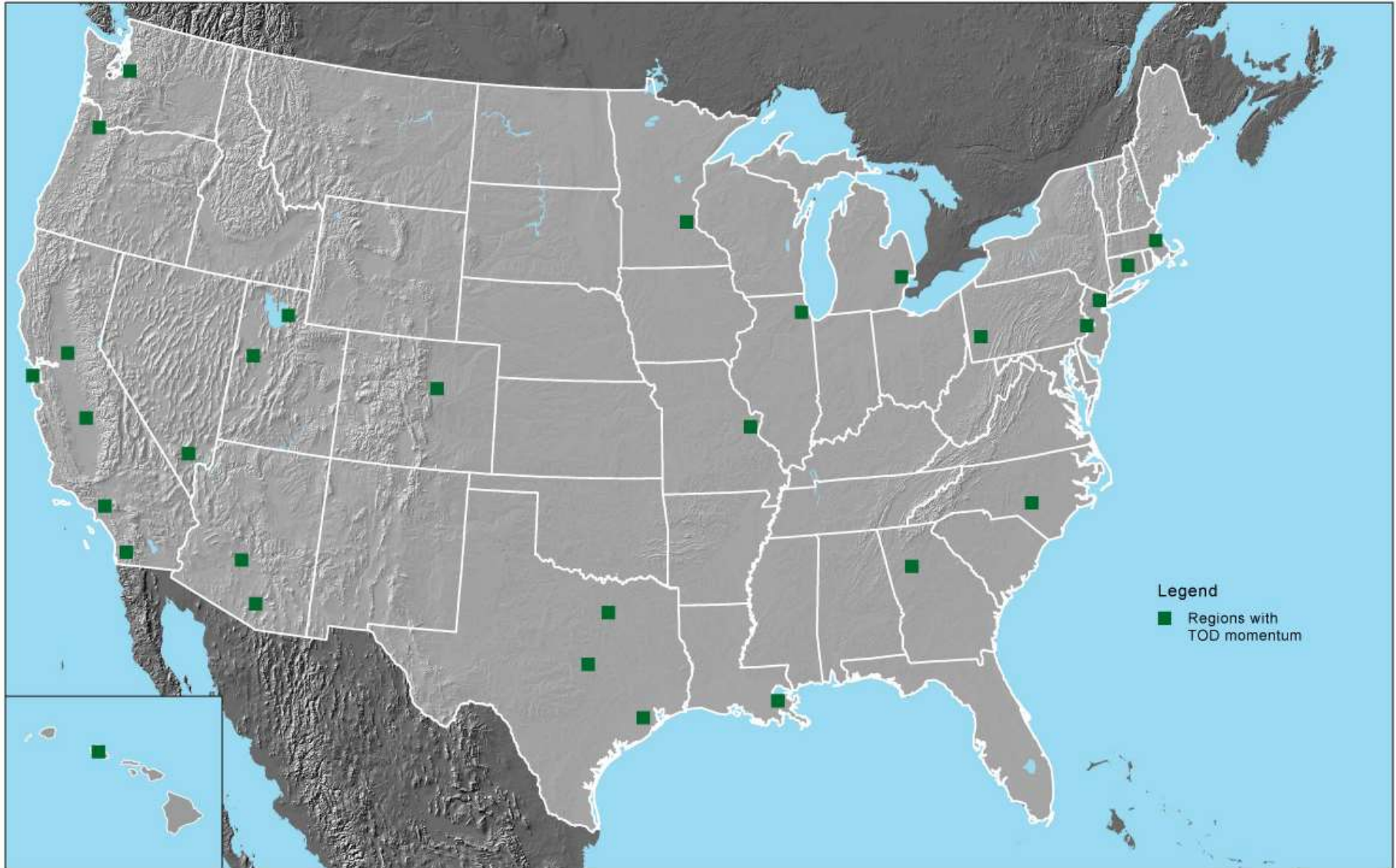
Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is a Growing National Movement



Regions Around the Country are Planning Transit



But transit momentum \neq TOD momentum



What is TOD Momentum?

Research Methodology:

- Proactive advocacy
- Political leadership and champions
- Supportive policies for TOD
- Investment in TOD
- HUD Grantee

Leaders in TOD Momentum

- Public Sector
- Developers
- Business
- Labor
- Advocates
- Funders
- Investors

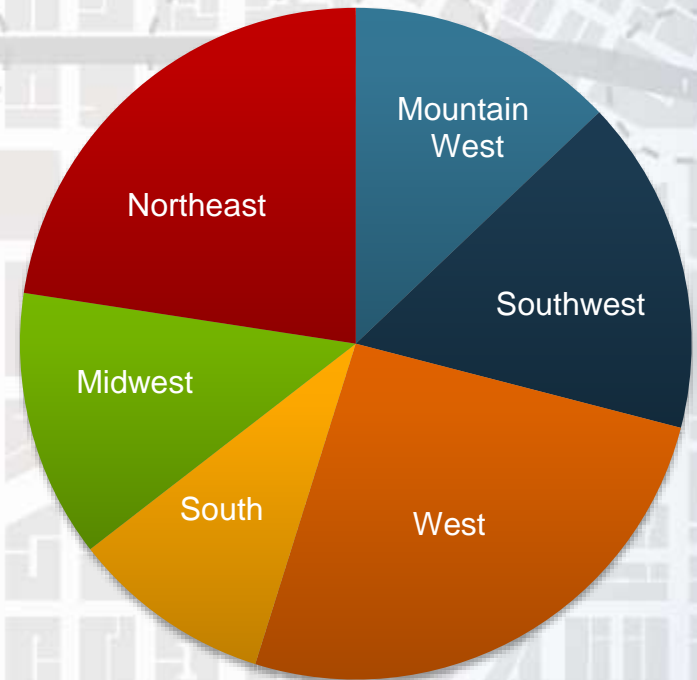
*Who has taken a leadership role in different regions?
Helps us speculate about why they are pursuing TOD*



Overall Findings

- More than half of regions with TOD support are in the western U.S.
- South & West 66% of US Poor Population in 2010
- 7 of 10 Metro Regions that added most poor: LA, Houston, Dallas, Miami, Riverside, Phoenix and Atlanta (Brookings)

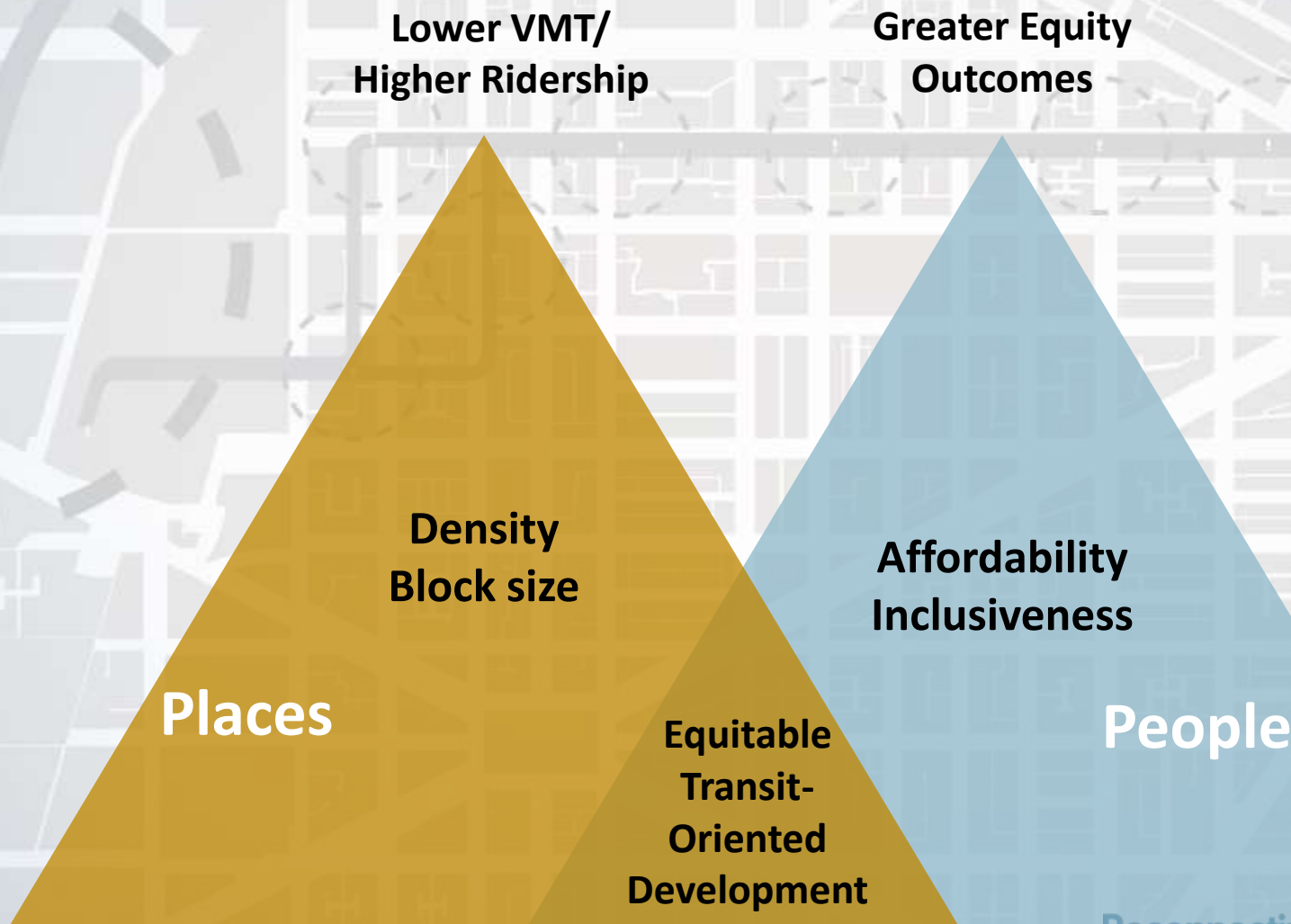
Geographic Distribution of Regions with TOD Support



What Has Motivated Places to Embrace TOD?

- Economic Competitiveness
- Congestion Relief
- Air Quality and Public Health
- Managing Growth
- Focusing Investment – Stimulating Revitalization

What do we mean by equitable transit-oriented development?



Lessons learned from the data: The “sweet spot” for equitable TOD

Lower VMT/
Higher Ridership

Greater Equity
Outcomes

Places

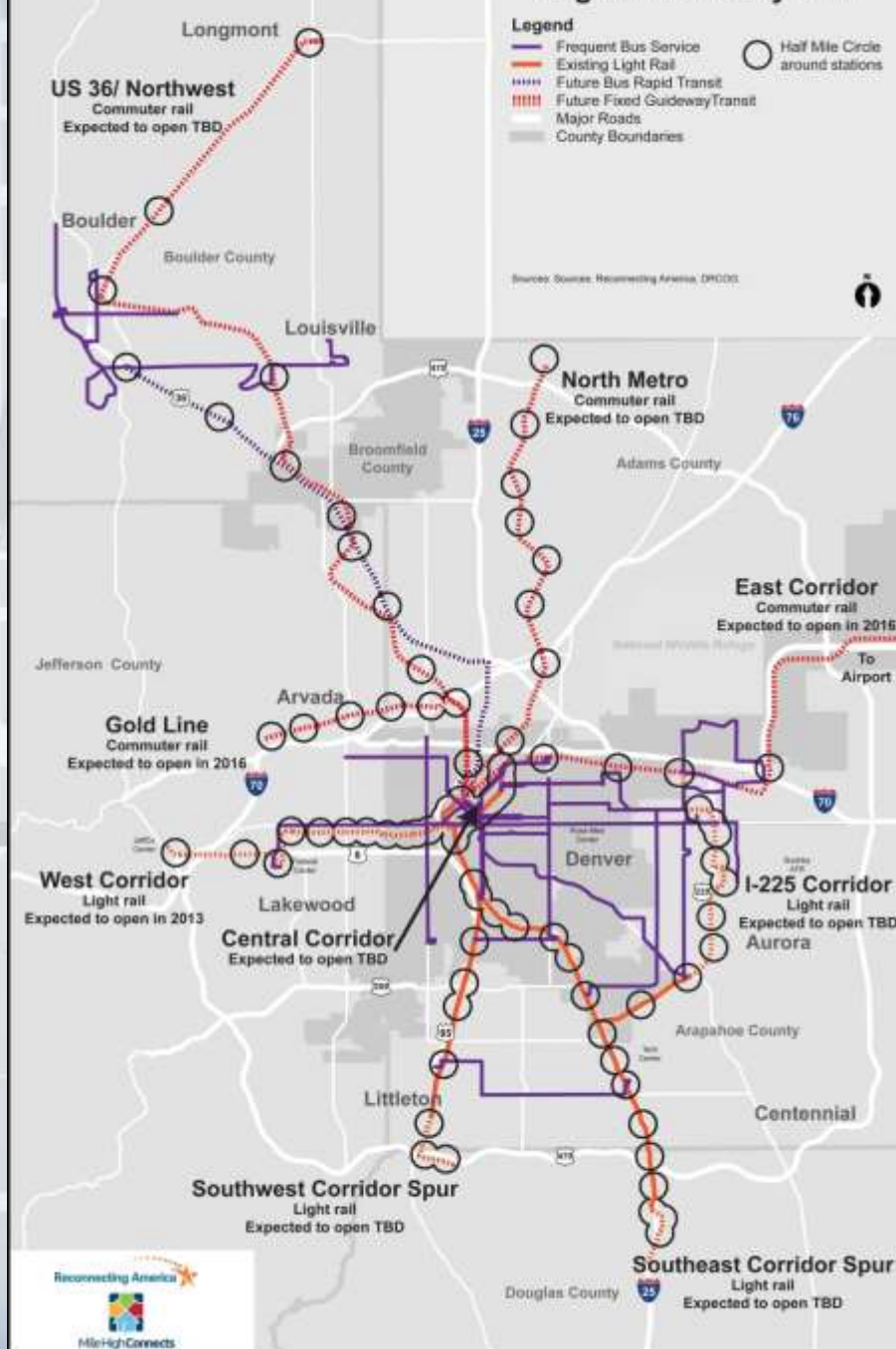
**CORE
TRANSIT
RIDERS**

People



Planning for Equitable TOD in the Denver Region

Overview of the Denver Region Transit System

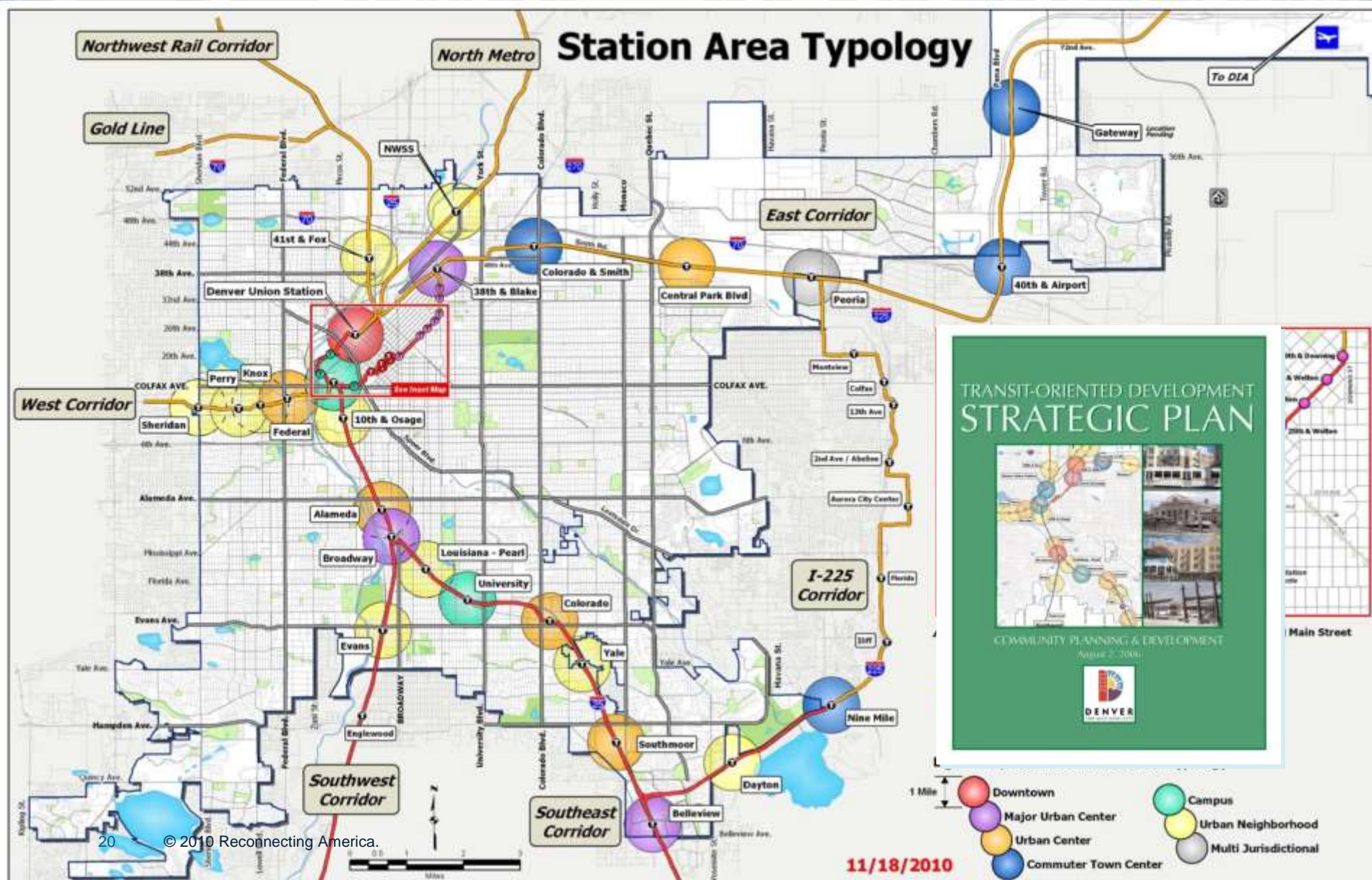


FasTracks: the Opportunity & Challenge

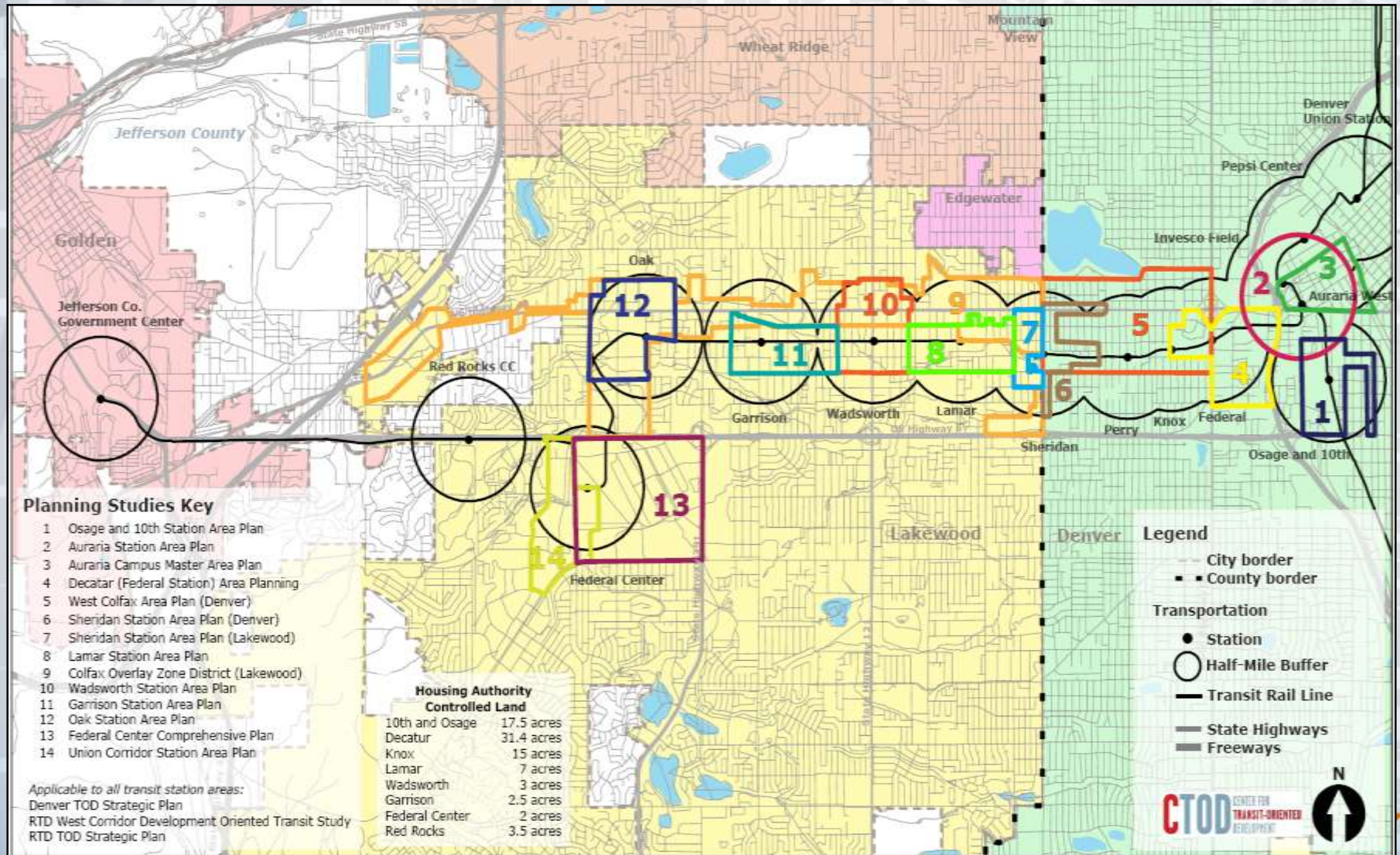
- \$7.8 billion investment
- 70 new stations
- 45,000 HHs
- 58.1% have less than a bachelors degree
- 40% will earn under 60% AMI

Who Will Benefit?

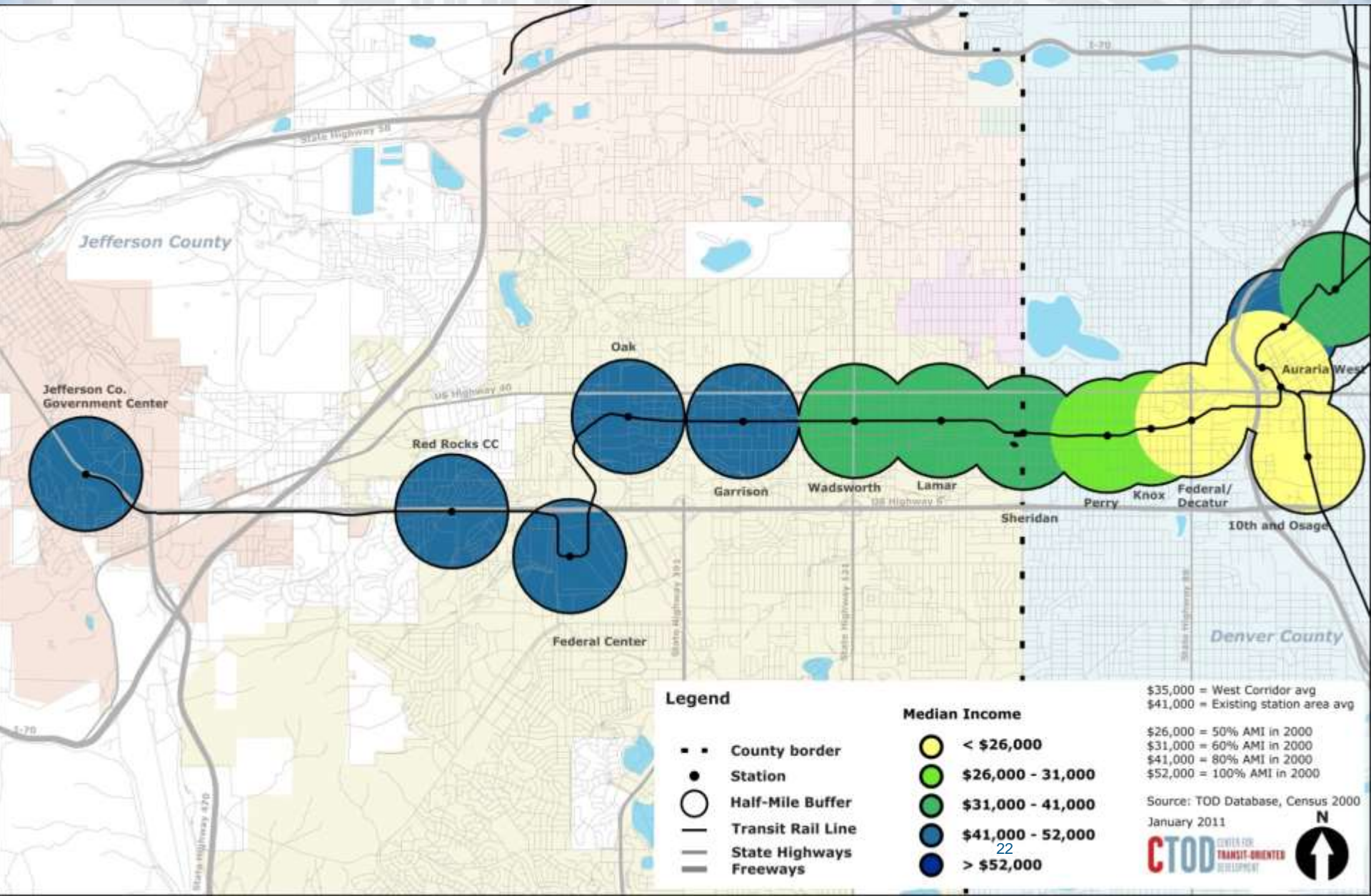
TOD Strategic Plan: Typologies



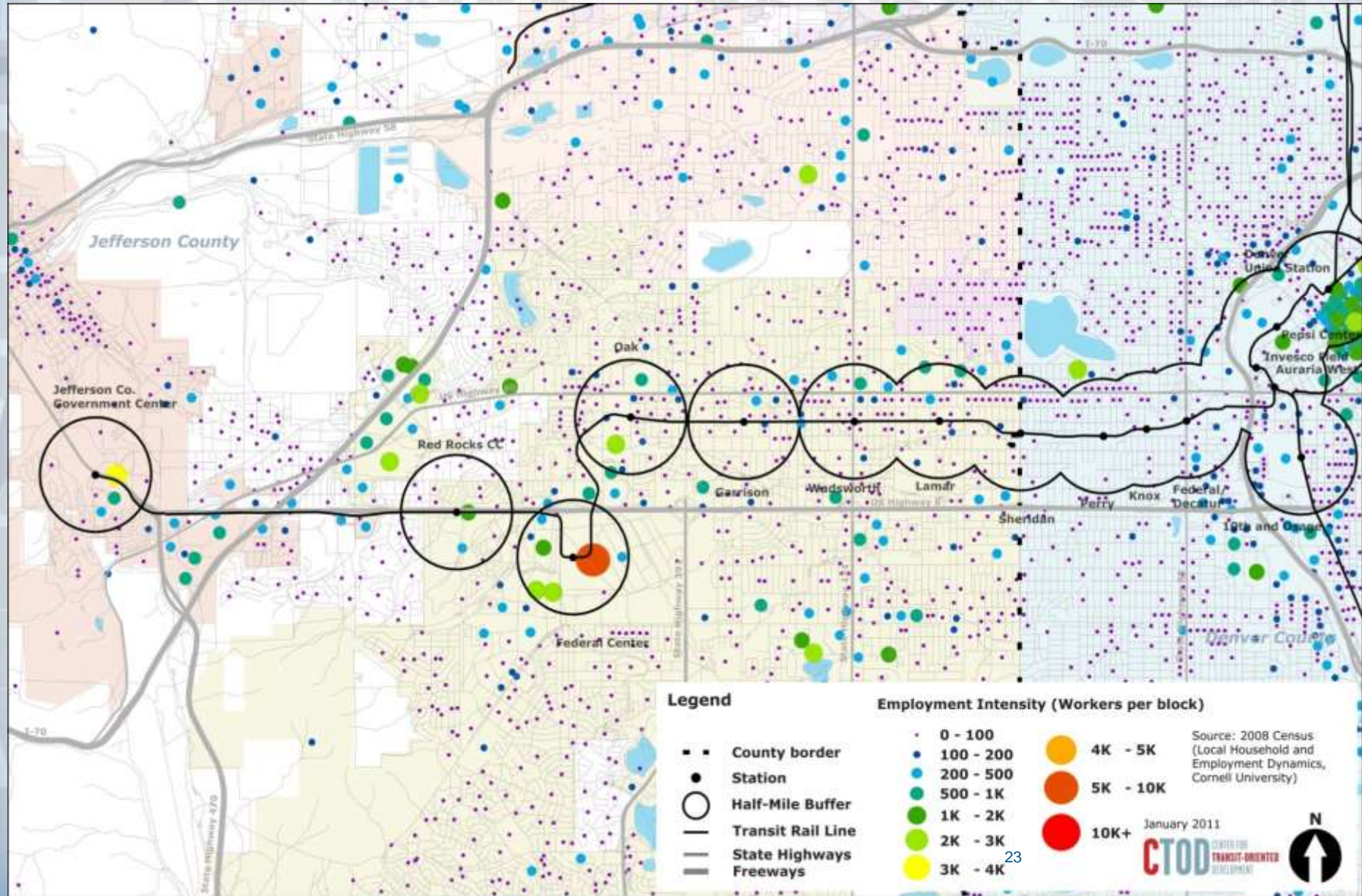
West Corridor TOD Implementation Strategy



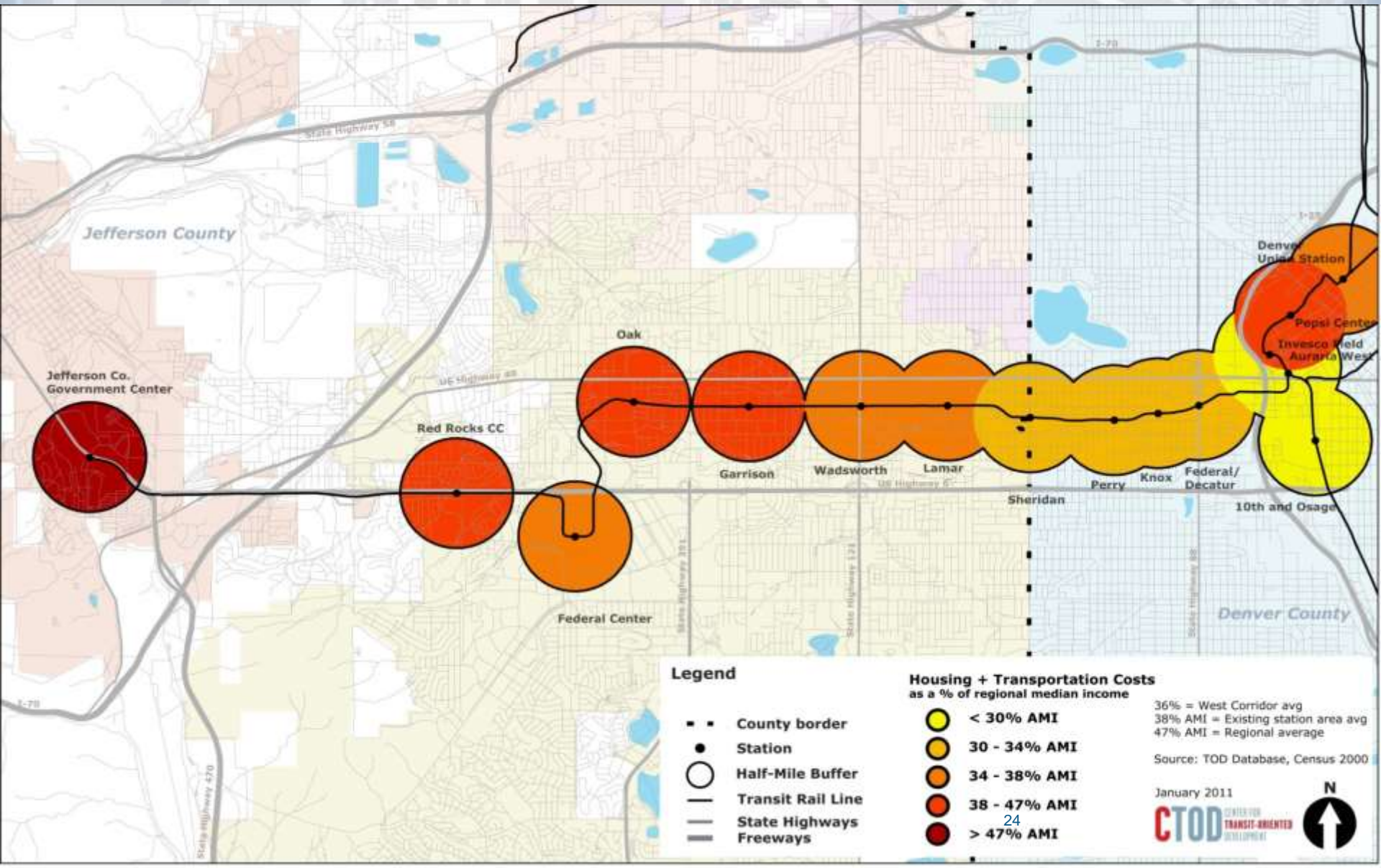
Median Household Income



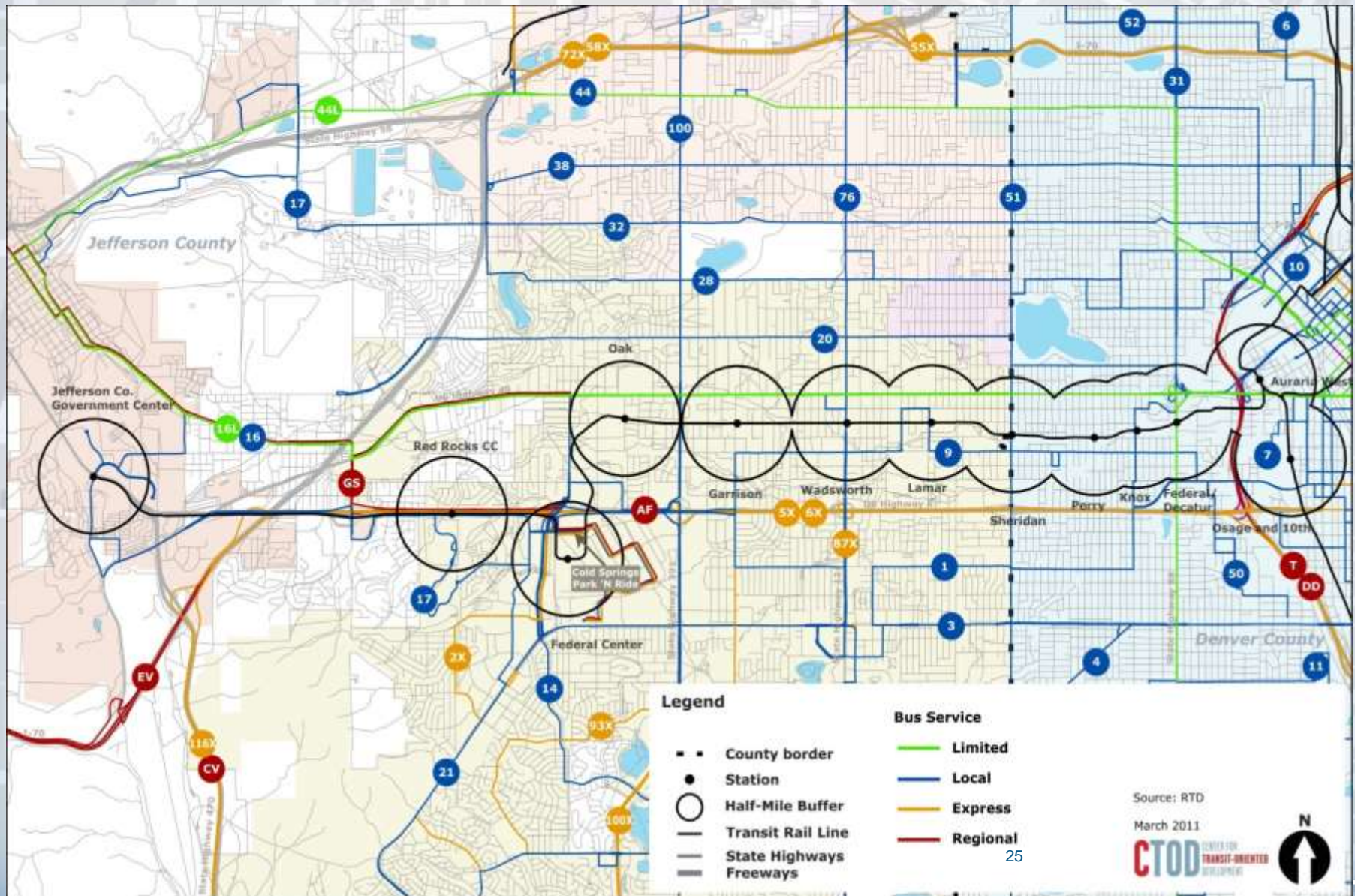
Employment Intensity



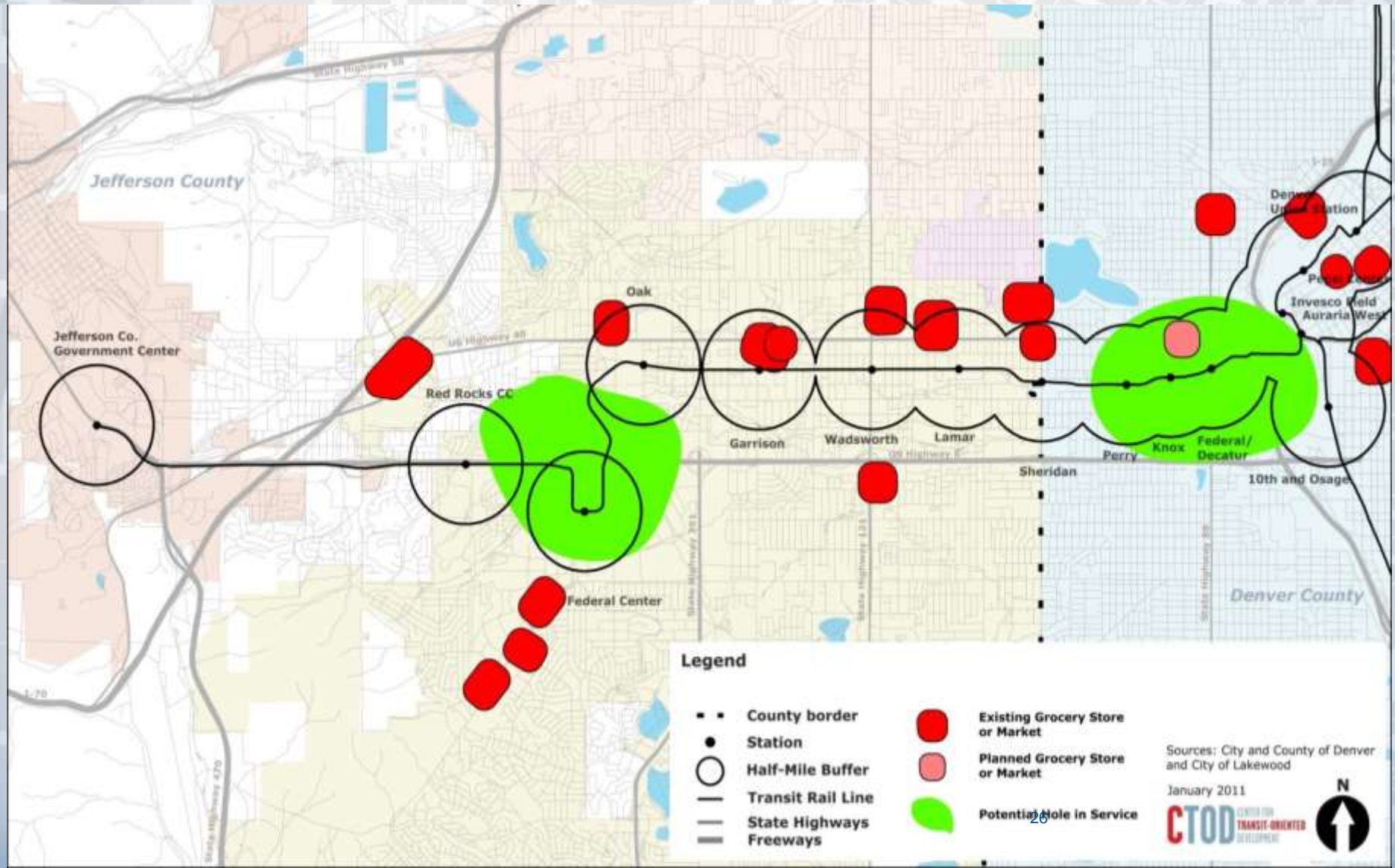
Housing & Transportation Costs



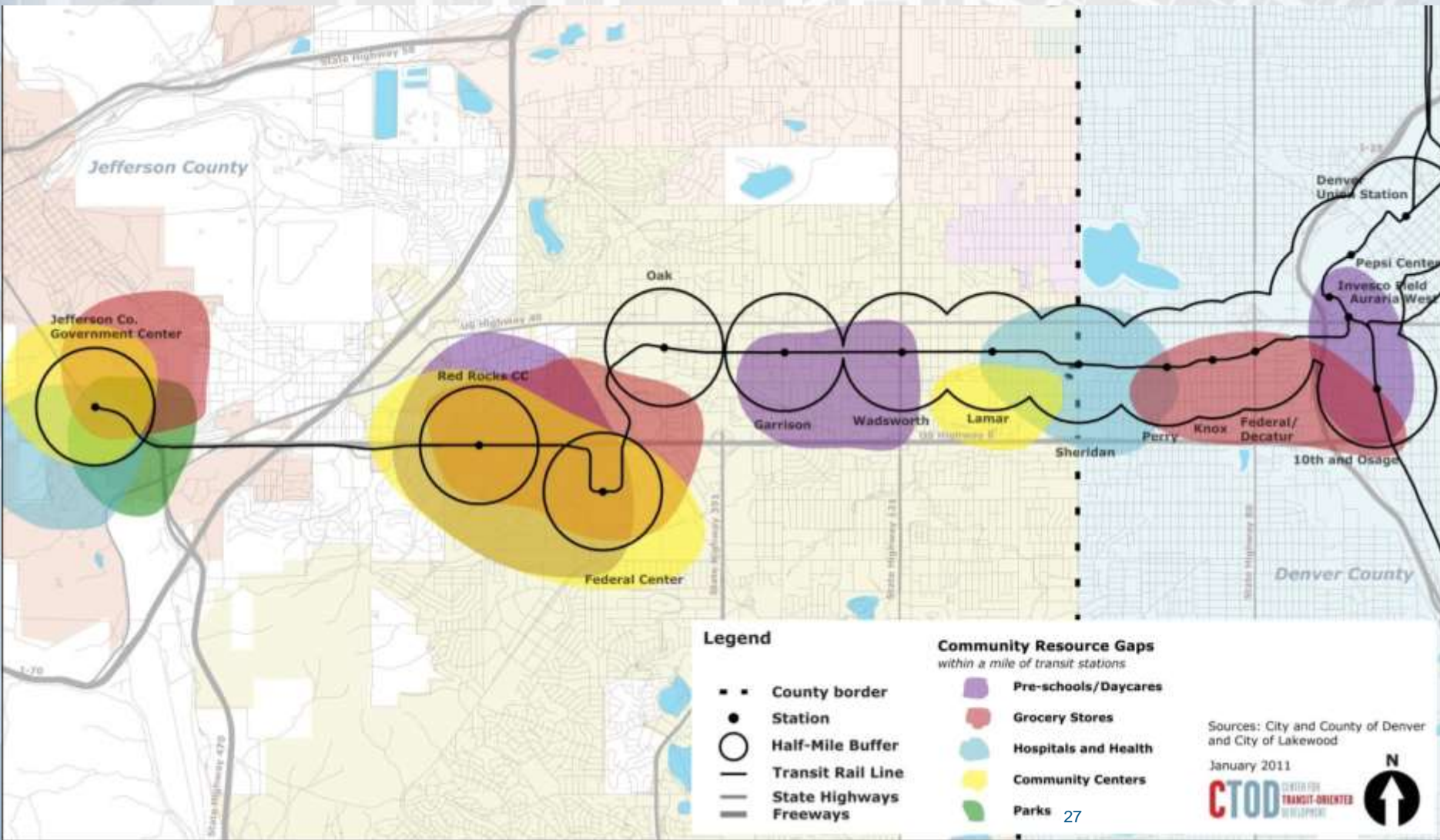
Infrastructure: Existing Transit Connections



Community Resources: Grocery Stores & Food Deserts



Community Resources: Where Are the Gaps?



What is Mile High Connects?

Mile High Connects (MHC) is a partnership of private, philanthropic and nonprofit organizations committed to developing inclusive, affordable, and livable communities within walking distance of transit. We work collaboratively to ensure the existing and future transit system expansion enables all people to connect to the opportunities that can lead to a more affordable, better quality of life. MHC is focused on using transit to link people to the places they live, work, learn and play in a safe, convenient and affordable manner.

Our Mission: To ensure that the Metro Denver regional transit system fosters communities that offer all residents the opportunity for a high quality of life.

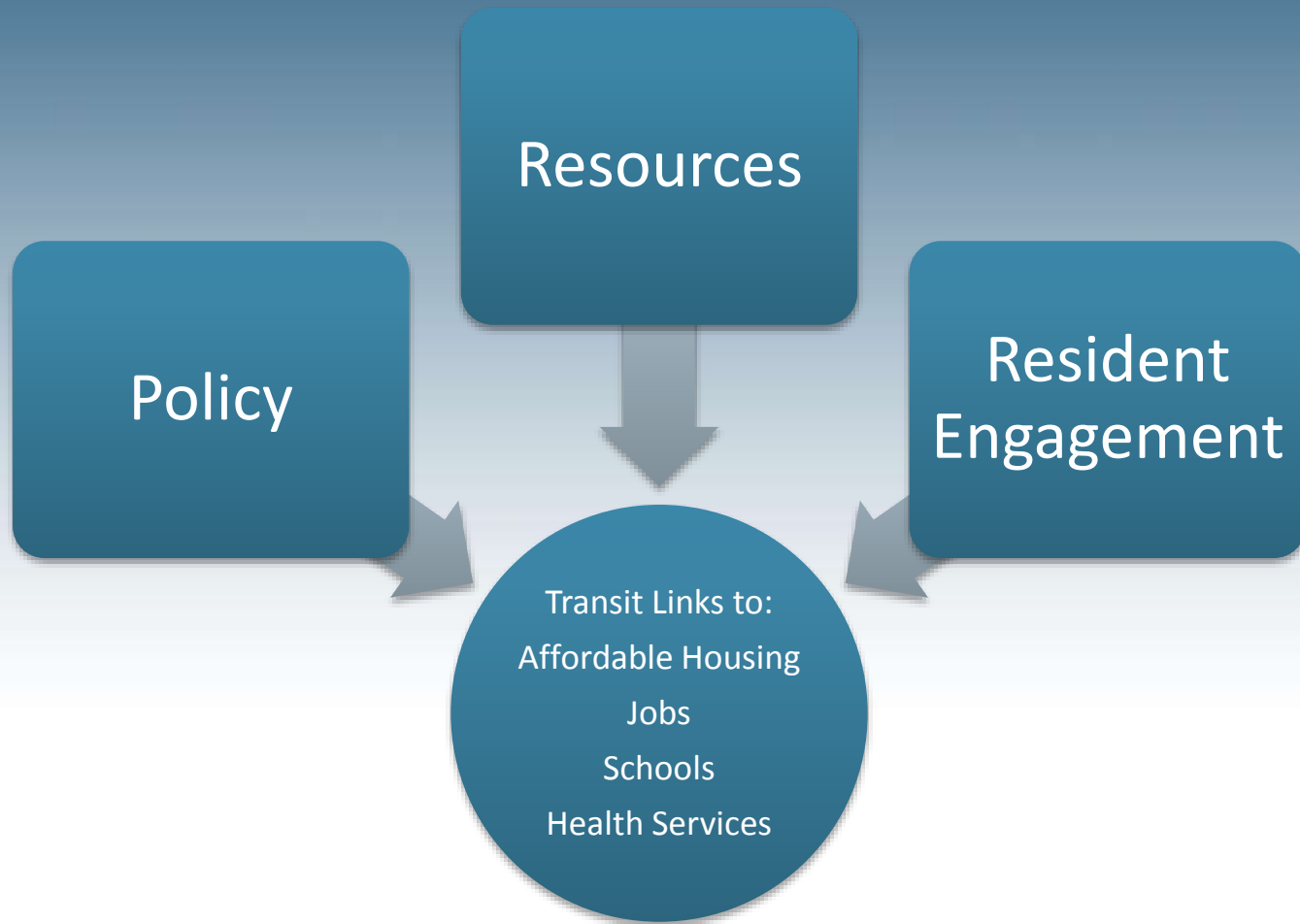


We achieve our mission by:

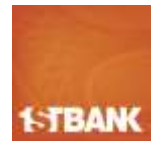
- ➡ **Increasing resources to build affordable inclusive communities along transit system.**
- ➡ **Influencing policy to ensure that all people are involved and considered in urban and economic planning.**
- ➡ **Increasing resident engagement in neighborhoods directly affected by the expanding transit system.**
- ➡ **Leveraging the existing and expanding transit system to link affordable housing with jobs, schools, and health services.**
- ➡ **Working to make the entire transit system more accessible to residents of the Metro Denver region's disadvantaged communities.**



Mile High Connects



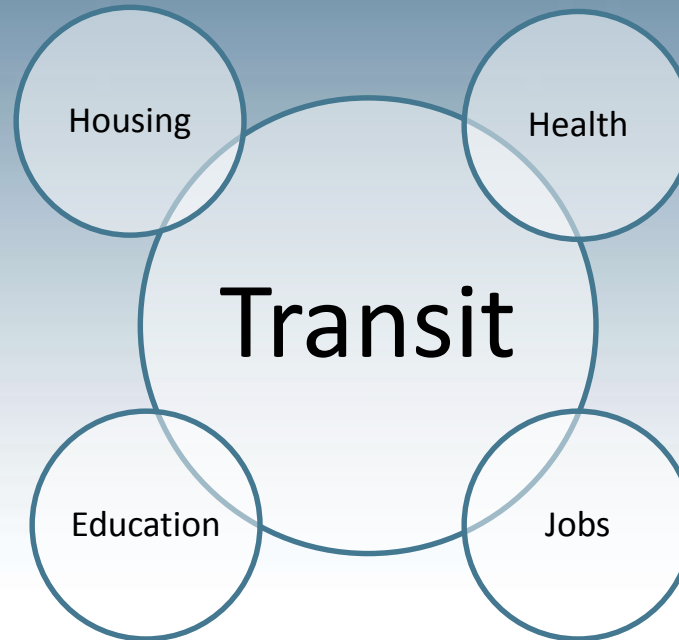
Members of Mile High Connects



The Regional Equity Atlas

How are the persons, places & things we care about connected?

Where are they?



How do I get there?

Do I even know where they are?

Can I get there?

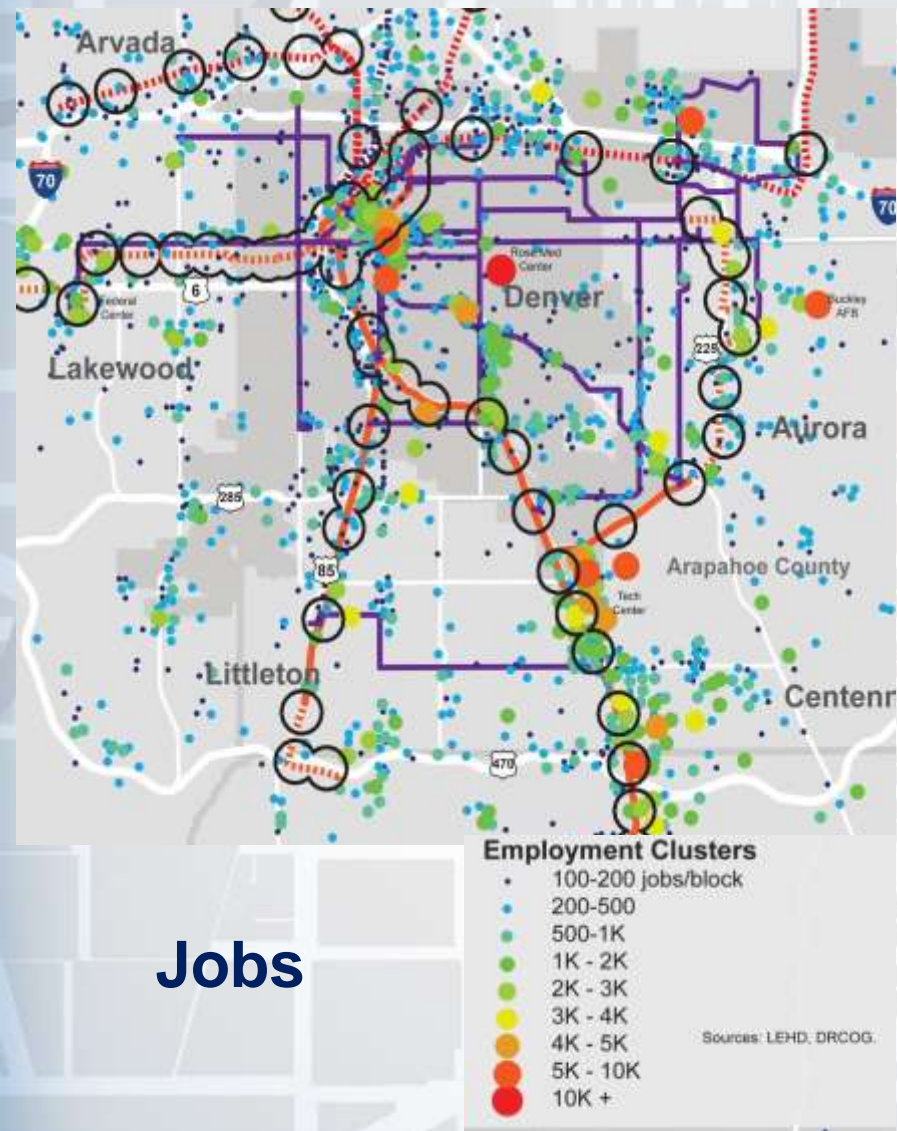


Key Findings

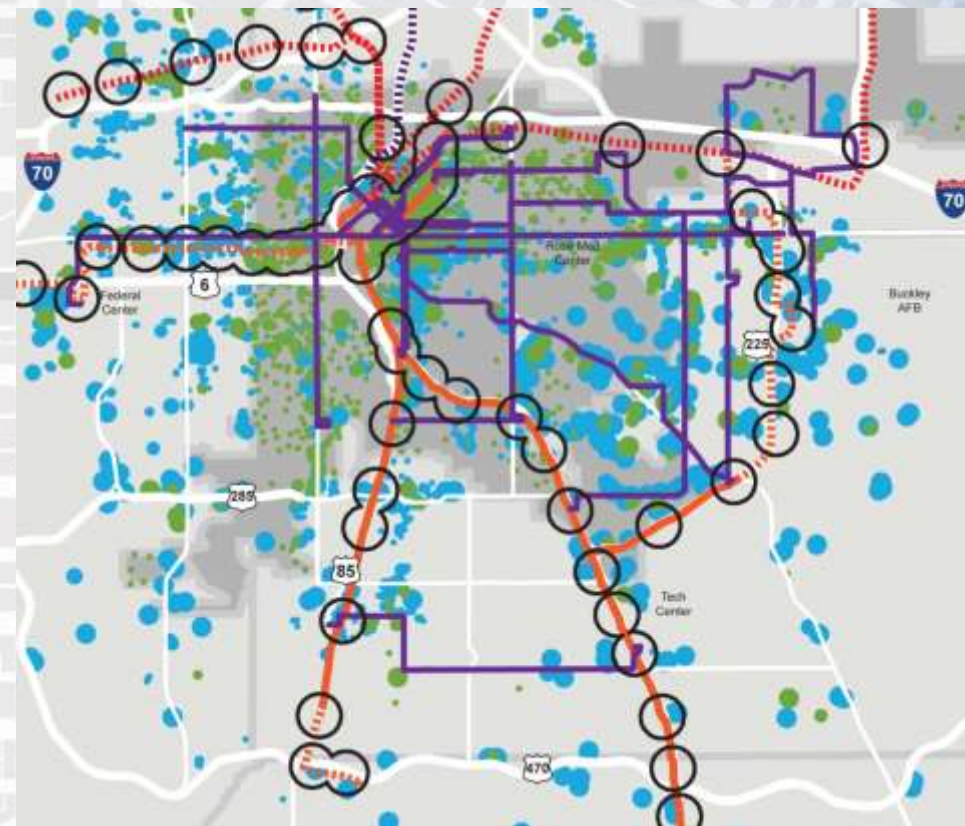
1. The region is interdependent.
2. Poverty is a regional issue.
3. New transit service will improve access to opportunity, but gaps will remain.
4. We need affordable housing strategies.
5. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the region.



The Region is Interdependent



Jobs

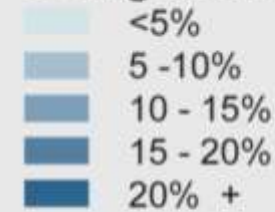


Affordable Housing

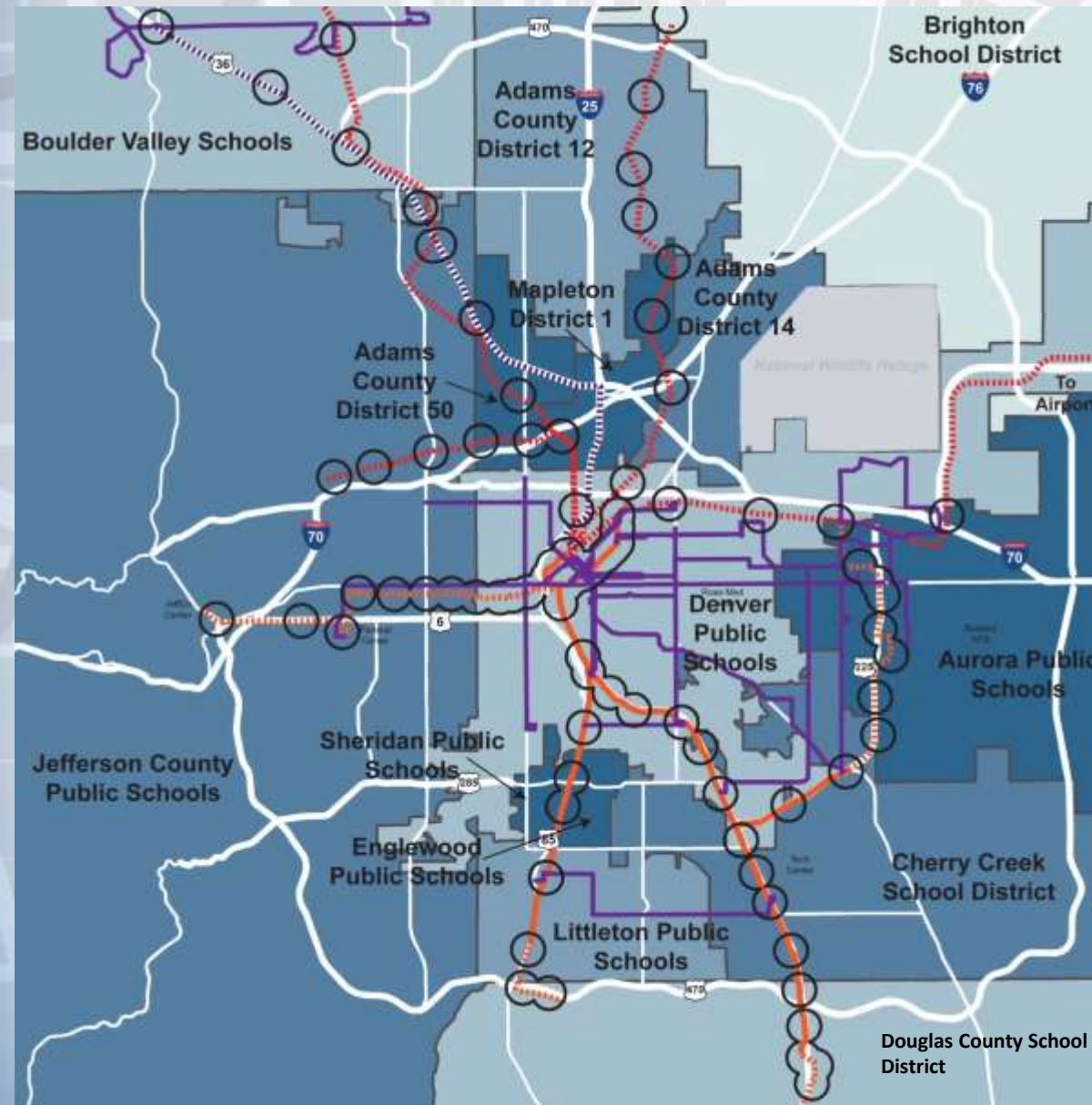
Poverty is a Regional Issue

Free & Reduced Lunch Participation

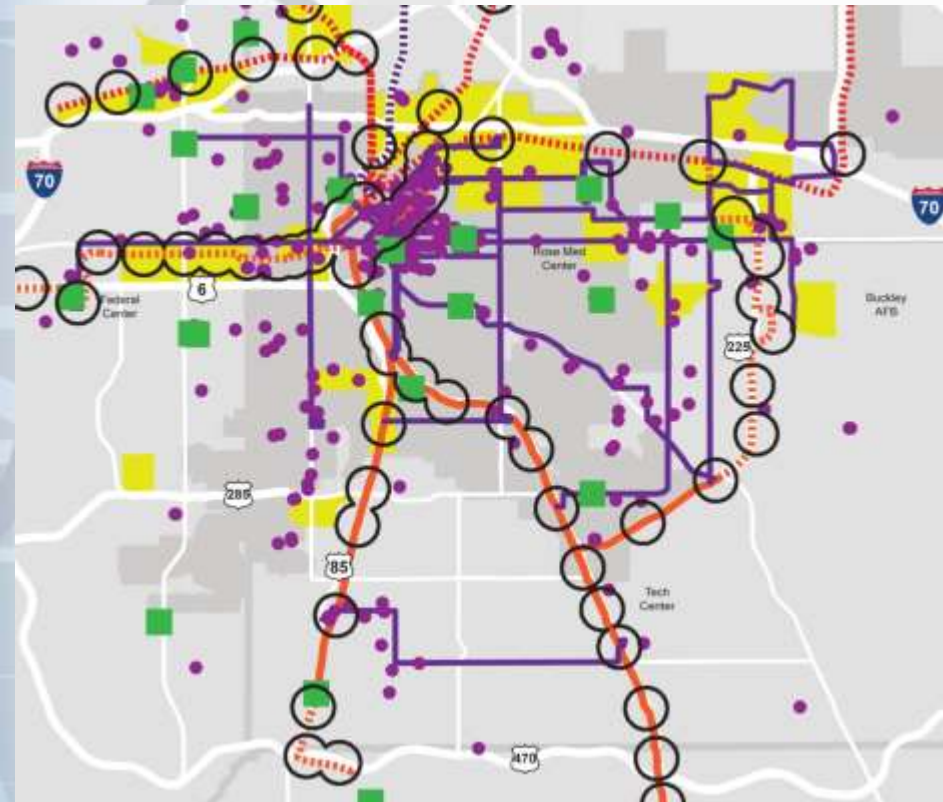
Change 2000-2010



Sources: Colorado Department of Education, DRCOG.



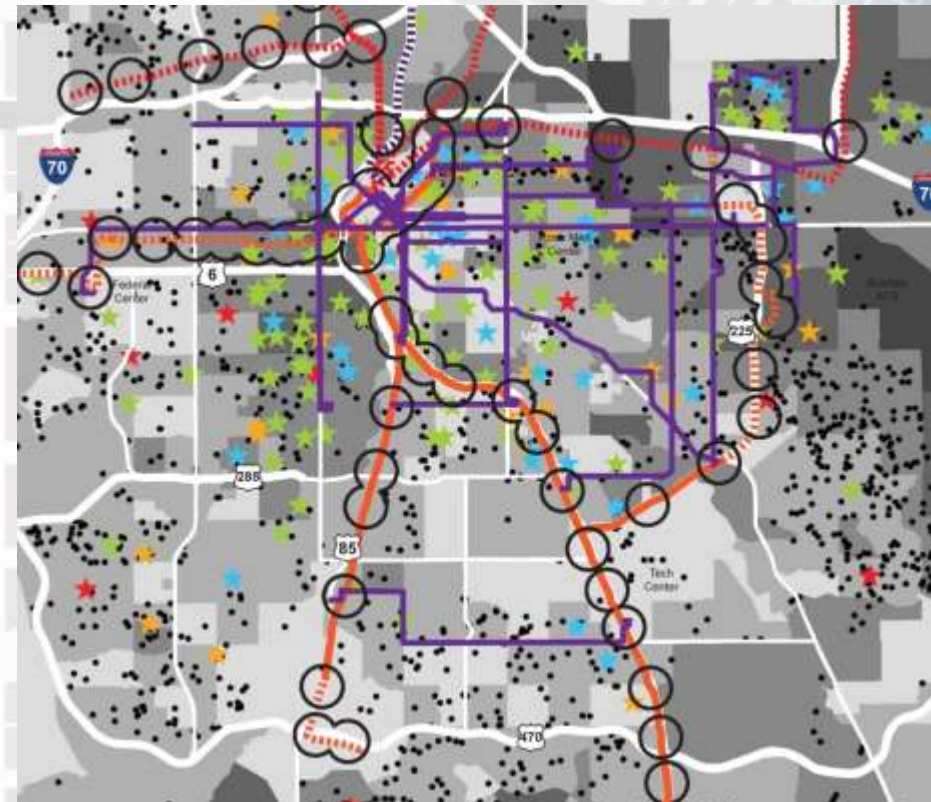
FasTracks will Improve Access to Opportunity, but Gaps will Remain



- Federally subsidized affordable housing
- Farmer's Market locations
- Food Deserts

Sources: HUD, Food Environment Atlas.

**Healthy
Food**



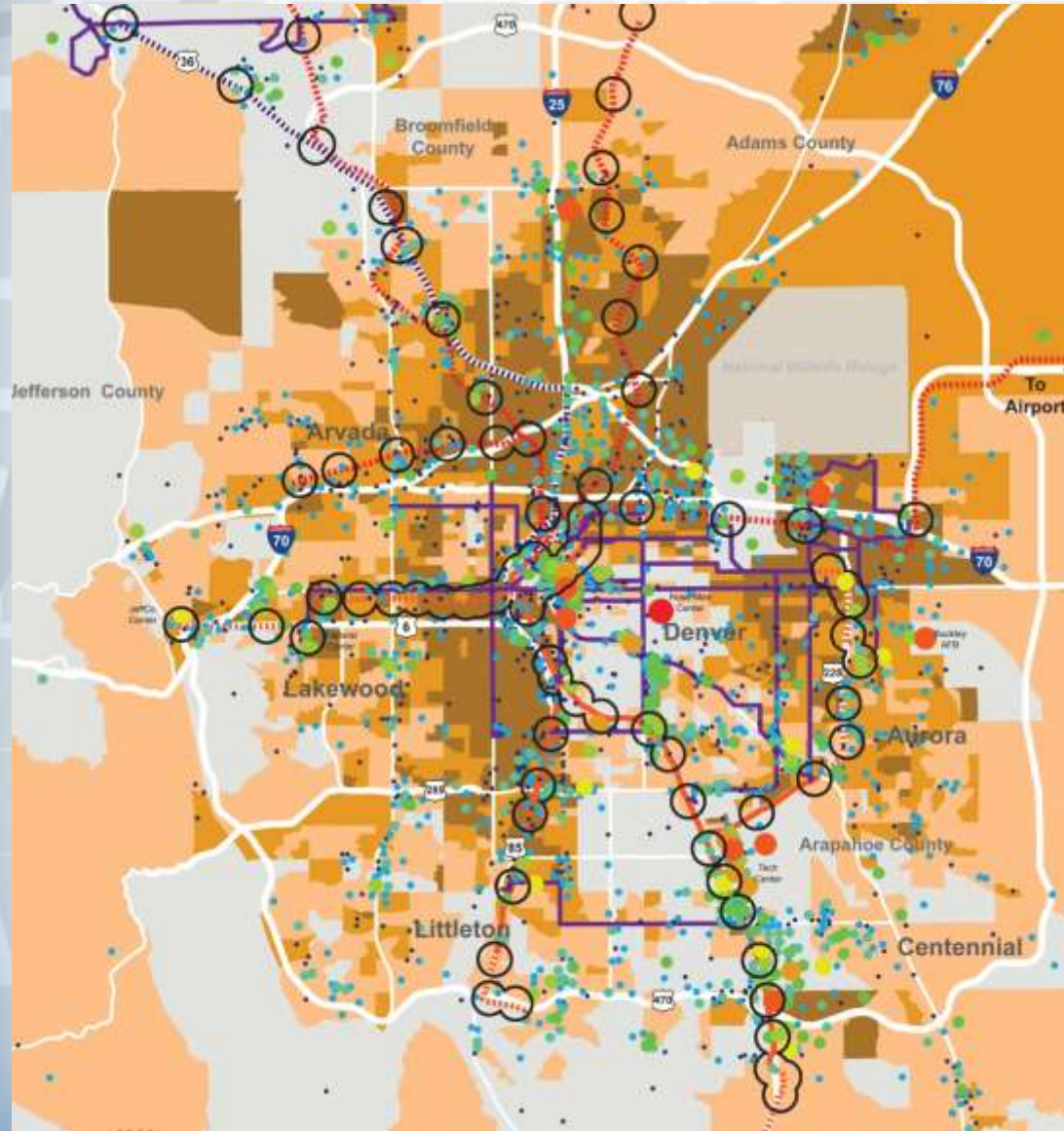
- | Children Under 5 | Preschool Ratings |
|------------------|---------------------|
| ■ <5% | ★ Qualistar Rated 1 |
| ■ 5-7.5% | ★ Qualistar Rated 2 |
| ■ 7.5-10% | ★ Qualistar Rated 3 |
| ■ 12.5-15% | ★ Qualistar Rated 4 |
| ■ 15% + | ● Unrated |

Sources: Qualistar Colorado, Census 2010, DRCOG

Preschools



FasTracks will Improve Access to Opportunity, but Gaps will Remain



People with a high school diploma or less



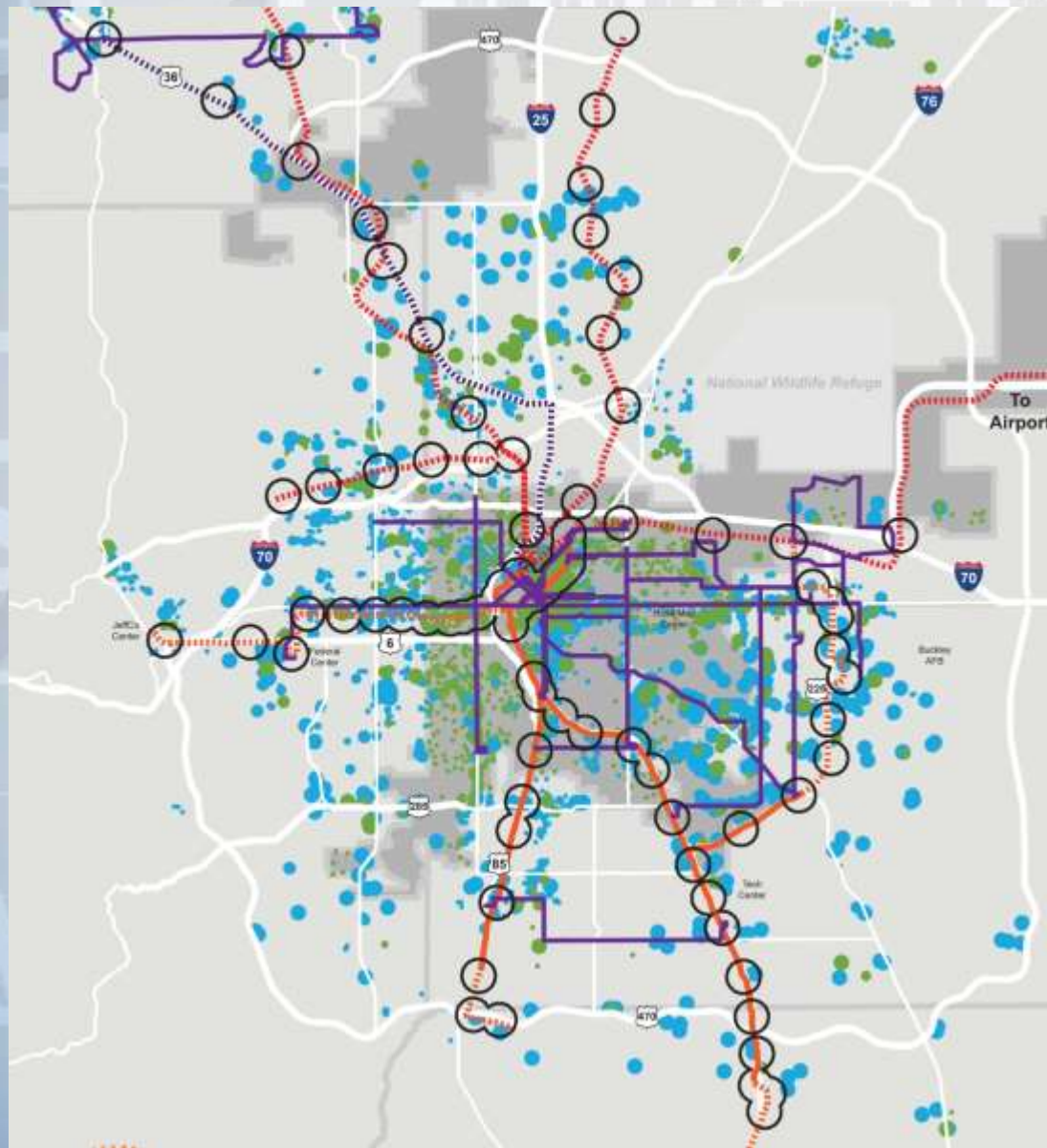
Sourc. LEHD 2009, American Community Survey 2005-2009, DRCOG.



Workers



Housing affordability is a regional issue



Distribution of Affordable Rental Housing in the Denver Region

Restricted Units

- 1 - 25 housing units
- 26 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 150
- 151 +

Market Rate Units

- 1 - 25 housing units
- 26 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 150
- 151 +

Sources: City and County of Denver & Community Strategies Institute, DRCOG.



What Mile High Connects Is Doing



Mile High Connects Strategic Framework 2012 – 2015 Summary

Our Mission: To ensure that the Metro Denver regional transit system fosters communities that offer all residents the opportunity for a high quality of life.

Long-term Outcome # 1

Livable communities near transit stops in which all people have access to affordable housing, quality jobs, quality education, health services and a healthy lifestyle.

Near Transit Stops ...

1. 90% of existing **affordable housing units** preserved
2. 25% of all housing built or preserved **affordable**
3. **Connections** between transit, affordable housing, jobs, health, and educational institutions and support services
4. **Multi-modal** (bike/pedestrian) access
5. Connectivity to **parks, trails, recreation**, and other hubs for physical activity
6. Access to **nutritious foods**
7. **Job training centers, childcare, and supporting services**
8. Businesses including **small/local business** located in close proximity
9. Workers connected to **middle-skill job** opportunities
10. High quality educational sites

Long-term Outcome # 2

Policies, resources, and agendas of regional agencies, local jurisdictions, and funding entities are supportive of a transit system that fosters communities that offer all residents the opportunity for a high quality of life.

1. Voters support regional **tax initiative** to fund the Regional Transportation District (RTD FasTracks)
2. **Public and private resources** realigned and increased to support transit
3. Local, regional and state resources for **last mile connections** and infrastructure
4. Expanded focus on **disadvantaged communities** by Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) and RTD

Local, regional plans and policies pertaining to areas near transit developed that ...

5. Develop, redevelop or preserve **affordable housing**
6. Support and incentivize **small business** creation and preservation
7. Incorporate **health impacts and indicators**
8. Ensure **school districts** in Metro Denver incorporate location of transit stops and access to transit in their site selection principles and practices
9. Create greater **wraparound support services** e.g. affordable childcare centers, ECE (early childhood education), health services, and job training centers

Long-term Outcome # 3

Increase engagement of community members, especially those most affected by transit build out.

1. Community engagement to ensure greater **focus on equity** in local and regional transit planning efforts
2. Build **leadership capacity** among community members to ensure sustainable focus on transit and equity.
3. Ensure **station area planning** includes the perspectives of small businesses and disadvantaged community members, especially those from low income communities and communities of color.

2012-2015 Goals

1. Increase and realign **public and private resources**
2. Influence **policy changes**
3. Increase **engagement of community members**
4. Increase **affordable housing** by transit
5. Create economic development plan and regional transit build out plans that connect **workers to middle-skill job** opportunities
6. Increase understanding of transportation access to **ECE and K-12 schools** of choice and related services for low-income communities
7. Promote effective strategies to **improve health** near transit
8. Build the **sustainability of Mile High Connects**



2012-2015 Goals of Mile High Connects

1. Increase & realign public & private resources
2. Influence policy changes
3. Increase engagement of community members
4. Increase affordable housing by transit
5. Create economic development plan and regional transit buildout plans that connect workers to middle-skill job opportunities
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Thank you!

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