

The State of ETOD in Chicago

Appendix 1: Progress on Strategic Priorities and Recommendations from Chicago's ETOD Policy Plan (2021)

Strategic Priority	Recommendation		Update	Progress	How has it been implemented?
<p>1. Build the City's Capacity to support ETOD</p>	1.1	<p>Continue convening ETOD Work Group and formalize cross-sector, cross-agency coordination, such as through the formal creation of an ETOD Task Force or other advisory body. Clarify interdepartmental roles in implementation and to promote accountability.</p>	<p>ETOD Work Group has convened regularly since 2019 with steady membership from City of Chicago departments, local and regional transit agencies, developers, artists, civic organizations and community based organizations. See full membership list at chicago.gov/etod.</p>	Substantial progress	ETOD Working Group
	1.2	<p>Dedicate full time City staff to serve as ETOD Manager in advancing policy recommendations and coordinating ETOD projects and programs.</p>	<p>Staff within Chicago's Departments of Housing, Planning and Development, Public Health and Transportation have held various responsibilities related to implementing ETOD; however, no full time City of Chicago staff positions dedicated to coordinating ETOD projects and programs have been created. Chicago Transit Authority's proposed 2026 budget includes two full time employees dedicated to ETOD.</p>	Some progress	Chicago Transit Authority FY2026 Budget
	1.3	<p>Create an ETOD evaluation framework and public and annual performance report, including setting targeted ETOD goals and tracking progress.</p>	<p>This report represents the first comprehensive update on ETOD goals and progress. An ETOD evaluation framework has not yet been developed.</p>	Some progress	State of ETOD Report
	1.4	<p>Create an ETOD Scorecard that community and government partners can use to assess future projects and programs. Include environmental justice principles and metrics, such as considering pollution reduction in impact assessment, as part of evaluation and scorecard efforts.</p>	<p>ETOD Scorecard developed by Metropolitan Planning Council, with community and stakeholder input, with dimensions related to: accessibility, affordability, community development, culture, density, sustainability, and transportation.</p>	Some progress	ETOD Research Agenda - ETOD Scorecard
	1.5	<p>Develop strategy to leverage publicly owned land and vacant lots near transit for public benefit, including publishing a directory of all public-owned land within designated TOD zones.</p>	<p><i>Chicago's Vacant Land Near Transit: An ETOD Deep Dive (2024)</i>, published by Elevated Chicago and DePaul Institute for Housing Studies catalogued City-owned and privately-owned vacant lands near transit, shares relevant data and community stories describing the impact of vacant land and provides resources and next steps. The City of Chicago's ChiBlockBuilder application, launched in 2022, facilitates the sale of all City-owned vacant lots. Elevated Works ETOD Technical Assistance Program (2023-2025) provided real estate coaching and webinars for developers on the City-owned land acquisition process.</p>	Substantial progress	ETOD Research Agenda - Vacant Land Near Transit
	1.6	<p>Address root causes of vacant land, including environmental contamination and remediation needs.</p>	<p>The City of Chicago allocated \$87 million in federal and bond funding to vacant lot remediation under the Chicago Recovery Plan (2023).</p>	Some progress	ETOD Research Agenda - Vacant Land Near Transit

	1.7	Develop a comprehensive ETOD calculator mapping tool combining existing resources from CNT and MPC. The calculator will help community members and developers identify qualifying ETOD sites and potential impacts.	Center for Neighborhood Technology and Metropolitan Planning Council jointly launch the ETOD Calculator (etod.cnt.org), a comprehensive mapping tool that identifies parcels eligible for ETOD development and estimates expected community impacts.	Substantial progress	ETOD Research Agenda - ETOD Calculator
	1.8	Standardize community engagement requirements and practices related to development and planning projects across City departments. Build on agreed-upon engagement principles and recommendations, such as those developed by Elevated Chicago, and utilize ETOD policies and projects as opportunities to test and pilot new engagement practices. Ensure multiple avenues of communication are utilized to reach the maximum amount of people.	Elevated Chicago and Duo Development release Community Engagement Principles 2.0 (elevatedchicago.org/cep) that outline eight principles and thirty strategies for authentic, intentional inclusion. Based on these principles, Duo Development develops the In.Field Toolkit (infieldkits.com), to fuel creativity, create strong relationships and deepen engagement. The Elevated Works ETOD Technical Assistance Program provides In.Field Toolkits and training to ETOD developers. Community engagement approaches vary by City department.	Some progress	Community Engagement Principles 2.0, In.Field Toolkit
	1.9	Develop public education and messaging tools to communicate the vision and case for ETOD	City of Chicago launches an ETOD microsite with a definition of ETOD, ETOD resources, information on grants and updates on ETOD-related policy. Elevated Chicago and JNJ Design developed "What is ETOD" illustration.	Substantial progress	Communications, Education & Outreach
2. Make ETOD required, easier, and more equitable	2.1	Apply health and equity impact assessments to the development of ETOD-related policy	ETOD Health and Racial Equity Impact Assessment completed (2022) by the Chicago Department of Public Health, the Illinois Public Health Institute, the City of Chicago Disability Advisory Committee, youth leaders and residents living near transit facing disinvestment and displacement pressure.	Substantial progress	ETOD Research Agenda - Health and Racial Equity Impact Assessment
	2.2	Improve design and use guidelines to promote walkability and transit-orientation in current TOD (TSL) ordinance, tailored to neighborhood context (such as market strength)	Connected Communities Ordinance (2022) includes guidelines and requirements to promote safe public space for pedestrians, and people using bikes, wheelchairs, scooters or other mobility devices. Qualifying developments must also comply with Transportation Demand Study and Management Plan guidance (2023).	Substantial progress	Connected Communities Ordinance
	2.3	Expand eligibility and strengthen density and parking incentives in current TOD (TSL) ordinance	Connected Communities Ordinance (2022) and City of Chicago Ordinance O2025-0015577 (2025) provided increased flexibility around parking requirements. Developments in transit-served locations in all but "D" (downtown) zoning districts can provide zero parking by right. In "D" (downtown) zoning districts, providing less than 50 percent of otherwise required car parking is allowed with an administrative adjustment. The Connected Communities Ordinance (2022) created additional density bonuses, including reductions in Minimum Lot Area, increases in Floor Area Ratio, flexibility in roof element height calculations and mechanisms to "swap" parking spaces for additional affordable housing units.	Substantial progress	Connected Communities Ordinance City of Chicago Ordinance O2025-0015577
	2.4	Allow more flexibility in permitted building uses, such as by permitting residential on the ground floor in more business and commercial districts.	City of Chicago Ordinance O2024-0008277 (adopted February 2025) allows ground floor conversions from commercial to residential use through an administrative adjustment in R, B, C and D districts (except C3 and DS).	Substantial progress	City of Chicago Ordinance O2024-0008277

2.5	Allow small scale multi-family housing in all TOD zones	City of Chicago's Missing Middle Infill Housing initiative provides land cost write-downs (\$1 per parcel) for City-owned land, plus financial assistance to developers building townhomes and two- to six-flats in neighborhoods that have experienced systemic disinvestment.	Some progress	City of Chicago Ordinance O2024-0008277
2.6	Strengthen the minimum internal and external bike parking requirements for TOD projects. Disconnect vehicle parking and bike parking requirements	Connected Communities Ordinance (2022) requires that residential buildings in transit served locations contain at least one bicycle parking space per dwelling unit.	Substantial progress	Connected Communities Ordinance
2.7	Establish a cap on off-street parking spaces allowable in all TOD areas identifying provisions, if needed, to minimize burden on low-income drivers.	For residential buildings, the Connected Communities Ordinance (2022) requires an administrative adjustment to increase the number of off-street parking spaces permitted from the otherwise applicable standards up to a cap of one parking space per unit (applicable to residential buildings within one half mile of CTA rail and Metra stations, under B, C and D zoning districts.	Some progress	Connected Communities Ordinance
2.8	Require parking to be paid or leased separately from housing in TOD projects (i.e. unbundle parking and housing costs) in TOD projects and potentially citywide.	City of Chicago's Transportation Demand Management Strategies for Transit-Served Developments (2024), developed as required by the Connected Communities Ordinance (2022), includes unbundled parking pricing as a recommended strategy developers should consider when proposing developments in transit-served locations and/or included in any required Travel Demand Studies or TDM memos.	Some progress	Connected Communities Ordinance
2.9	Include sustainable transportation options and incentives in zoning code. i.e. Require developers to implement a certain number of options and incentives, such as transit passes, to manage traffic demand.	City of Chicago's Transportation Demand Management Strategies for Transit-Served Developments (2024), developed as required by the Connected Communities Ordinance (2022), includes these recommended strategies related to sustainable transportation options: mandated off-street bike parking (default strategy due to zoning), public bike parking (default strategy due to zoning), bicycle commuter amenities, family bicycle amenities, shared streets and vehicle access restrictions, shared-mobility station/parking or infrastructure, transit stop infrastructure development/improvement, pedestrian network improvements, accessibility elements beyond ADA standards, wayfinding signage to multimodal transportation options, bicycle network improvements, activity counters and sensors, sustainable transportation programs and services (e.g. bicycle maintenance workshops) and sustainable transportation promotion and information (e.g. live commuter information display).	Substantial progress	Connected Communities Ordinance
2.10	Allow shared parking arrangements to meet parking requirements in TOD areas	Shared parking arrangements for nonresidential uses with different hours of operations may be approved via administrative adjustment (Chicago Municipal Code: Section 17-10-0700). No additional progress made on formal shared parking arrangements in transit-served locations.	Some progress	Connected Communities Ordinance

2.11	Strengthen equity in procurement and supplier diversity policies to ensure small and minority owned firms and Black, Brown, Indigenous, Asian, other people of color, and people with disabilities benefit from new development	City of Chicago 2025 Architectural Technical Standards Manual (draft as of October 2025) encourages general contractor joint ventures, especially ones that include a junior firm classified as emerging, and certified as a MBE, WBE, VBE, or DBE by the City of Chicago or Cook County. Analysis showed that a majority of ETOD developers participating in the Elevated Works ETOD TA program hired small and minority owned subcontractors.	Some progress	ETOD Grants and Elevated Works
2.12	Create quality jobs through ETOD projects with priority given to local residents and firms	ETOD projects create jobs through pre-development, development and operations phases, though a system of tracking impact has not been developed.	Some progress	ETOD Grants and Elevated Works
2.13	Require health, arts and culture, and equity considerations in TOD-project level design	Elevated Chicago's Arts & Culture Strategy is a community-driven initiative designed to protect, preserve and perpetuate Chicago's diverse cultural identities as a vital part of ETOD. Through this strategy, Elevated Chicago is convening a Creatives Table to bring together artists, community leaders and developers, disbursing grants to support arts and culture projects, and creating tools and trainings to uplift artists and cultural practitioners.	Substantial progress	Elevated Chicago Art & Culture Strategy
2.14	Develop architectural design templates that can streamline and simplify city approvals for ETOD projects.	Not specific to ETOD, the Chicago Architecture Center facilitated a design competition for City of Chicago's Missing Middle Infill Housing initiative, providing 32 design templates for single family home, two- and three-flat, rowhouse and six-flat typologies.	Some progress	Chicago Missing Middle Initiative
2.15	Improve pedestrian infrastructure in TOD zones by prioritizing and targeting resources based on need, starting with an inventory of current sidewalk infrastructure.	Chicago Department of Transportation's Strategic Plan (2021) includes a goal to "Install and enhance crosswalks and curb ramps at transit stops and other priority locations with a focus on equity." The Connected Communities Ordinance (2022) requires developments in B and C districts to follow Pedestrian Street requirements (17-3-0504) if they are within 1/2 mile of CTA or Metra stations. Elevated Works technical assistance providers advised ETOD developers on pedestrian enhancements.	Some progress	Connected Communities Ordinance ETOD Grants and Elevated Works
2.16	Improve visibility and accessibility of transit and mobility resource signage and wayfinding, especially for people with disabilities or for whom English is not their first language. Ensure accessible options are provided.	In February 2026, CTA unveiled bilingual maps and signage in Chinese and English at the Cermak-Chinatown (Red Line) and Halsted (Orange Line) train stations and announced more improvements to expand language access across the system to come through additional signage, future multilingual Ventra support, Spanish announcements on buses and better tools for	Some progress	CTA Innovation Studio
2.17	Increase access to shared micro-mobility options, including bike-share, e-bikes, e-scooters and car-share.	City of Chicago's Transportation Demand Management Strategies for Transit-Served Developments (2024), developed as required by the Connected Communities Ordinance (2022), includes these recommended strategies related to micromobility: Shared-mobility station/parking or infrastructure (e.g. bike share, scooter share), Transit and shared mobility memberships or discounts, Mobility wallet and transit benefits. Elevated Works technical assistance providers advised ETOD developers on shared micromobility options.	Substantial progress	Connected Communities Ordinance ETOD Grants and Elevated Works

2.18	Prioritize funding to make CTA and Metra rail stations fully accessible to people with disabilities, clean and safe for all passengers, and to provide sufficient rail capacity for new riders	Metropolitan Planning Council conducted an analysis of CTA station accessibility. The All Stations Accessibility Program (2018) is a dedicated planning effort by CTA to make all stations accessible by 2038. CTA's Red and Purple Line Modernization initiative includes goals to both enhance accessibility and increasing transit-oriented development opportunities within the corridor.	Some progress	CTA All Stations Accessibility Program
2.19	Ensure high-performing bus service, especially along TOD bus corridors. Explore options for equitable enforcement of blocking bus and bike lanes that does not disproportionately harm low-income residents. Consider bus priority treatments.	The Transportation Equity Network (TEN), a coalition of community groups, equitable transportation advocates, civic organizations, and other stakeholders, advances bus priority corridors, including bus rapid transit (BRT), as an equitable public transportation option in Chicago. TEN published <i>Bus Priority Corridor Principles and Recommendations (2025)</i> to ensure that CDOT's Better Streets for Buses plan centers the needs of bus riders and commuters, particularly those in historically transit-disconnected communities. In 2025, CTA identified 20 bus routes that will have service added to ensure 10-minute of better scheduled service. All 20 of these routes are part of the transit-served location definition in the Connected Communities Ordinance.	Substantial progress	Transportation Equity Network Smart Streets Pilot
2.20	Prioritize high-quality bicycle infrastructure to, from and within ETOD areas. Support bike lanes and other active transportation investments.	In 2025, Chicago surpassed 500 miles of bikeway infrastructure, including protected bike lanes, neighborhood greenways, buffered bike lanes, bike lanes, marketed shared lanes and off-street trails. X out of Y CTA or Metra stations have a Divvy bikeshare station co-located (within 250 ft of an entrance or exit).	Substantial progress	Chicago Department of Transportation Connected Communities Ordinance
2.21	Preserve existing unsubsidized affordable housing within TOD zones, such as by disincentivizing the demolition and deconversion of 2-4 flat buildings	The Connected Communities Ordinance (2022) establishes that properties that are zoned RT, RM, B or C and that are within transit-served locations <i>and</i> are within an Affordable Requirements Ordinance Community Preservation Area cannot have a detached house until it is rezoned to an RS zoning district. In RT zoning districts that meet these two criteria, a two-flat is the minimum density allowed. In RM, B and C zoning districts that meet these two criteria, a three-flat is the minimum density allowed. The Northwest Side Preservation Ordinance (2024) made the following amendments to the Demolition Surcharge Ordinance (O2021-746): increases the surcharge amount to \$20,000 per unit and \$60,000 per building in Pilsen and 606 Pilot Areas, extends the Demolition Surcharge sunset date to December 31, 2029, and amends the boundaries to the 606 Predominance of the Block District in the Northwest Side community areas of Avondale, Hermosa, Humboldt Park, Logan Square and West Town (Sec. 17-7-090). The ordinance also creates the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase (606) Block Pilot Program.	Some progress	Connected Communities Ordinance Northwest Side Preservation Ordinance
2.22	Streamline and incentivize the production of multi-family affordable housing near transit.	In communities with low levels of affordability (designated as an "Inclusionary Area" in the Affordable Requirements Ordinance), the Connected Communities Ordinance creates a new mechanism to require a vote in the City Council Committee on Zoning, Landmarks and Building Standards for buildings located in a TOD area if the building has at least 20% of its dwelling units legally restricted affordable.	Substantial progress	Connected Communities Ordinance

	2.23	Strengthen affordability and accessibility requirements for city-supported housing development in TOD zones, including through updates to the Affordable Requirements Ordinance	The Connected Communities Ordinance (2022) exempts ground floor, accessible "Type A" dwelling units in buildings with two or more units from the minimum lot area (MLA) per unit and floor area ratio (FAR) calculations in RS-3, RT-3.5, and RT-4 zoning districts.	Substantial progress	Connected Communities Ordinance
	2.24	Modify the City's Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) to include preference for building affordable housing in TOD zones, especially for very low-income residents.	The Chicago Department of Housing 2025 Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) considers proposed project applications based on whether the site is located within a Transit-Served Location ("TSL") under the City's zoning ordinance and in proximity to essential services and amenities.	Substantial progress	2021 Qualified Allocation Plan 2025 Qualified Allocation Plan
	2.25	Develop incentives and policies to preserve and retain community organizations, small businesses, and other neighborhood assets in TOD zones	City of Chicago ETOD grants and Elevated Works technical assistance supported small business building near transit, including some, like Wild Onion Market, a co-op grocery store, that advanced shared ownership and community wealth building. Elevated Chicago's Art & Culture Strategy is designed to protect, preserve and perpetuate community cultures as a critical component of ETOD, through a \$1.5 million commitment to public art, community spaces, cultural activations, artistic collaborations with transit agencies, and embedding cultural protection as a core value in city development.	Substantial progress	ETOD Grants and Elevated Works Elevated Chicago Art & Culture Strategy
	2.26	Encourage joint development opportunities with transit agencies to advance ETOD.	The Northern Illinois Transit Authority Act (2025) clarifies that the Board of Trustees of any Transit District may acquire property for transit-supportive development, and may enter into agreements with governmental, not-for-profit and for-profit entities for the development, construction and operation of transit-supportive developments.	Some progress	Northern Illinois Transit Authority Act
	2.27	Prioritize ETOD in applications for city funding that supports housing and economic development, including but not limited to the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund.	The American Rescue Plan Act and Chicago's Housing and Economic Development Bond funded 29 ETOD pre-development and development grants between 2023 and 2025.	Some progress	ETOD Grants and Elevated Works
	2.28	Develop incentives for the creation, activation and programming, and long-term stewardship and maintenance of public and open space in ETOD projects.	Elevated Chicago's Arts & Culture Strategy distributes grants in support of creative placemaking and placekeeping efforts across the city.	Substantial progress	Elevated Chicago Art & Culture Strategy
	2.29	Develop incentives for services that would benefit young children, families and pregnant people near transit hubs or in ETOD projects.	Chicago ETOD grants and Elevated Works technical assistance have supported ETOD projects focused on providing services or housing to young children and families, including Little Angels Daycare and Abrams Intergenerational Village.	Some progress	ETOD Grants and Elevated Works
3. Embed ETOD principles into Chicago's citywide planning process	3.1	Develop a process for the City and partners to conduct racial and health equity assessment on land use plans and zoning decisions.	Several City of Chicago planning processes have incorporated health and racial equity impact assessment components, including the 95th Street Corridor Plan. The Chicago Department of Public Health and the Illinois Public Health Institute led and published the Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (ETOD) Health & Racial Equity Impact Assessment in 2022.	Some progress	ETOD Health & Racial Equity Impact Assessment (2022)

	3.2	Establish a framework for neighborhood land use plans that adheres to the goals of equity, resiliency and diversity and recognizes the specific opportunities within TOD geographies	We Will Chicago, the City of Chicago's citywide plan adopted by the Chicago Plan Commission in 2023, encourages future neighborhood plans to include strategies that align with the goals and objectives laid out in the plan.	Substantial progress	We Will Chicago (2023)
	3.3	Prioritize investments in transit, biking, and walking in the Citywide Plan.	We Will Chicago, the City of Chicago's citywide plan adopted by the Chicago Plan Commission in 2023, calls for expanded transit infrastructure as a climate mitigation strategy, focused growth and density around transit hubs and the creation of transportation networks that support greater connectivity by active and sustainable options such as walking, public transit, biking and other methods that do not require car ownership, prioritizing communities with the greatest mobility needs.	Substantial progress	We Will Chicago (2023)
	3.4	Incorporate health and safety into the Citywide Plan.	We Will Chicago, the City of Chicago's citywide plan adopted by the Chicago Plan Commission in 2023, includes "Public Health & Safety" as one of eight pillars.	Substantial progress	We Will Chicago (2023)