

# Promoting socially-equitable transit and transit-oriented development (TOD): What are the key planning and policy levers?



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**RESEARCH AIM:** To identify the key **contextual, institutional, and organizational factors** associated with high levels of **regional support for equitable transit and TOD** across U.S metropolitan areas.

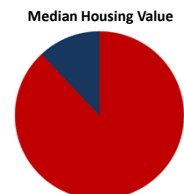
## JUSTIFICATION

### Transit plays a large role in shaping the life opportunities of disadvantaged populations

- Literature suggests access to transit generally improves employment outcomes
- Transit accessibility also linked to health and financial well-being benefits
- Because of its higher-frequency and more reliable service, rail transit may be particularly effective in connecting to jobs and other necessities

### Realization of benefits is dependent on the affordability of housing near transit

- Research suggests that housing costs generally increase in proximity to rail transit
- This could be a concern for vulnerable residents in transit-rich neighborhoods
- Ultimately, increased housing costs may prevent these residents from enjoying long-term benefits



Adapted from Pollack et al. 2010

### Demographic changes suggest a suburbanization of poverty

- Increasingly, low-income families are residing in areas with poor transit access

### Increased reliance on private autos among low-income is concerning

- Increased transportation costs for households that may already have few resources
- May undercut broader environmental and economic goals given that low-income populations are much more likely to use transit

### In response to emergent trends, many U.S. metros are developing regional rail transit

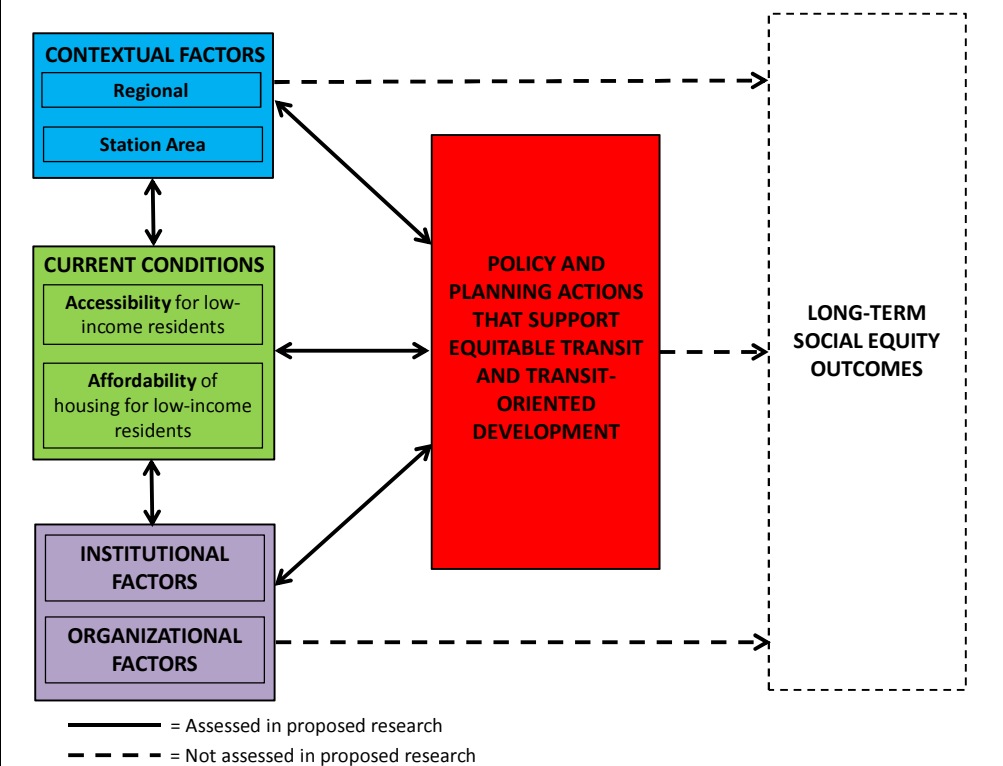
- However, it is unclear if regional rail transit benefits lower-income residents living outside of central cities
- Furthermore, there is little comparative research on how socially-equitable outcomes can be maximized through planning and policy decisions

## EXPECTED CONTRIBUTIONS

### The present research will fill gaps in the literature by:

- Exploring the **combined effects of accessibility and housing affordability** associated with regional rail transit across U.S. metropolitan areas
- Identifying **key planning and policy levers** that most effectively promote social equity
- Investigating **institutions and collaborative structures** that support equitable transit
- Informing **decision-making** around coordinated transportation and housing policy

## CONCEPTUAL MODEL



## CASE SELECTION

**Case:** All rail corridors and stations in selected region that are currently operating, under construction, and/or fully-funded through dedicated sources

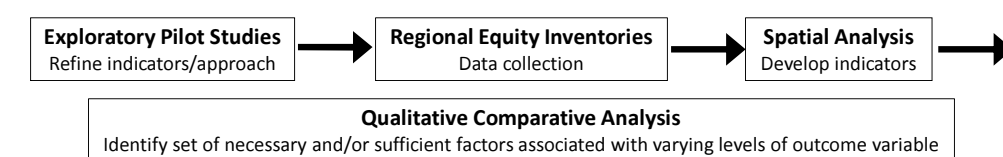
### Case selection criteria:

- System serves **multiple jurisdictions** and is operated by agency with **regional authority**
- Majority of corridors initiated **after passage of ISTEA\*** in 1991

**Sampling:** Universe of eligible cases (n = approx. 15 – 25 cases)

\*Intermodal Surface Transportation Equity Act

## PROPOSED METHODS



## OUTCOME VARIABLE:

### LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR SOCIALLY-EQUITABLE TRANSIT AND TOD

#### Measures:

- Presence of **dedicated regional funding for affordable housing** near transit
- Presence of **regional coordination around affordable housing**
- Presence of **integrated regional land use and transportation modeling**
- Presence of discussion about **affordable housing in the regional transportation plan**
- Presence of **regional-level fair housing and/or anti-gentrification policies**
- Share of stations with **community-based agreements** at stations
- Share of stations with **inclusionary zoning/other affordable housing policies**

## EXPLANATORY VARIABLES:

### CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

#### Measures:

- Regional** (characteristics and distribution of regional population)
- Station area** (share of station areas susceptible to gentrification)

### CURRENT CONDITIONS

#### Measures:

- Share of region's **low-income residents living near station areas**
- Affordability of housing** for low-income residents
- Share of region's **protected affordable housing** near station areas

### INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS

#### Measures:

- Level of vertical support** from state/federal governments
- Level of **municipal fragmentation**
- Presence of funding secured through **region-wide ballot initiative**

### ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS

#### Measures:

- Level of horizontal collaboration** among local and regional coalitions
- Presence of **national-level policy actors** working in region

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