

TOD Policy Update – Findings & Recommendations

Committee of the Whole | November 4, 2026

Metro Transit

Metro Transit

FORWARD

Connecting People • Strengthening Communities • Improving Lives

Metro Transit Forward is the shared strategic framework that states our priorities, shapes our decisions, and guides our actions.

VISION AND MISSION

We connect people, strengthen communities, and improve lives by delivering high-quality public transportation.

REGIONAL CORE VALUES

The Metropolitan Council's regional core values shaping *Imagine 2050* guide our work: equity, leadership, accountability, and stewardship.

MEASURING PROGRESS

We know we are successfully advancing our mission when:

- ↑ Ridership increases
- ↑ Satisfaction with Metro Transit increases

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Employees

We value employees and continuously improve how we attract, retain, develop, and support our workforce.

SIGNS OF SUCCESS

- ↑ Overall employee satisfaction
- ↑ Employees who report feeling safe while working
- ↑ Employee retention rate
- ☑ Achieve hiring targets
- ☑ Achieve Affirmative Action Plan goals

Experience

We provide a consistently safe, clean, and welcoming experience on our system.

SIGNS OF SUCCESS

- ↑ Riders who report feeling safe while riding and waiting
- ↑ Riders who report experiencing clean vehicles and stations
- ↑ Rides taken through pass programs
- ↑ Use and availability of transit information data & tools
- ↓ Crime rate
- ↓ Rates of safety events and passenger injuries

Service

We offer service that is convenient, reliable, and environmentally sustainable.

SIGNS OF SUCCESS

- ↑ Share of population with access to frequent service
- ↑ Jobs accessible via transit
- ↑ Trips that are on time
- ↑ Percent of service delivered
- ☑ Report greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled reductions attributable to transit ridership

Purpose of today's conversation

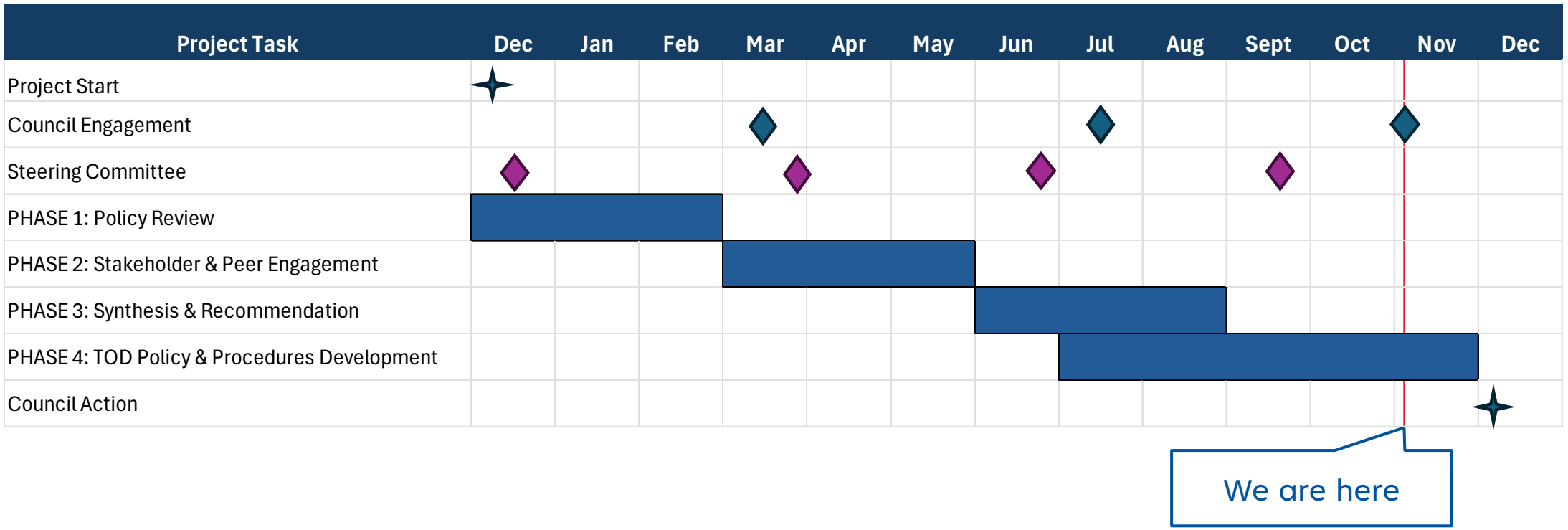
- Share key findings & recommendations to update the Council's TOD Policy
- Share recommendations to improve TOD Policy implementation
- Receive critical feedback to guide final policy language



Green Line, Prospect Park Station

(Image source: SRF Consulting)

Schedule


Project Task
Dec
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sept
Oct
Nov
Dec
Project Start
Council Engagement
Steering Committee
PHASE 1: Policy Review
PHASE 2: Stakeholder & Peer Engagement
PHASE 3: Synthesis & Recommendation
PHASE 4: TOD Policy & Procedures Development
Council Action
We are here

Integration of Efforts

Phase	Source Elements
Phase 1: Policy Review	• Imagine 2050; existing TOD Policy; existing Transportation Policy Plan; internal TOD policy research; memos and correspondence regarding relevant Council authorities
Phase 2: Stakeholder & Peer Engagement	• Internal stakeholders: Council Chair and Members; steering committee and subgroups, department leaders, Office of General Counsel, TOD Office • External stakeholders: Bloomington, Hennepin County, Ramsey County, Richfield, St. Paul, Woodbury • Development interests: Colliers, Twin Cities Land Bank, Wellington • Peer agencies: BART (Bay Area), CalTrain (CA), CTA (Chicago), DART (Dallas), KCATA (Kansas City), LA Metro (Los Angeles), MARTA (Atlanta), Oregon Metro, RTA (Chicago), SFMTA (San Francisco), TriMet (Portland), VTA (San Jose)
Phase 3: Synthesis and Recommendation	• Interpretation of Policy Review, evaluation of Stakeholder & Peer Engagement notes and transcripts, Steering Committee feedback, follow up meetings with Office of General Counsel and department leaders
Phase 4: TOD Policy & Procedures Development	• Incorporation of all prior phases, multiple consultant team workshops, multiple focused discussions with TOD Office

Key Findings - External

- Market demand for walkable, transit-rich neighborhoods has grown substantively in the Twin Cities region and nationally.
- Significant investments in transit are increasing the opportunity cost of limited TOD planning and project delivery.
- Local partners and developers are frustrated by slow, inconsistent, inflexible, and complex project delivery processes.
- Local partners have widely varying bandwidth, experience, and resources to support projects on Council-owned land.
- Peer agencies are undertaking TOD at a much broader scale than the Metropolitan Council today.

Key Findings – Internal

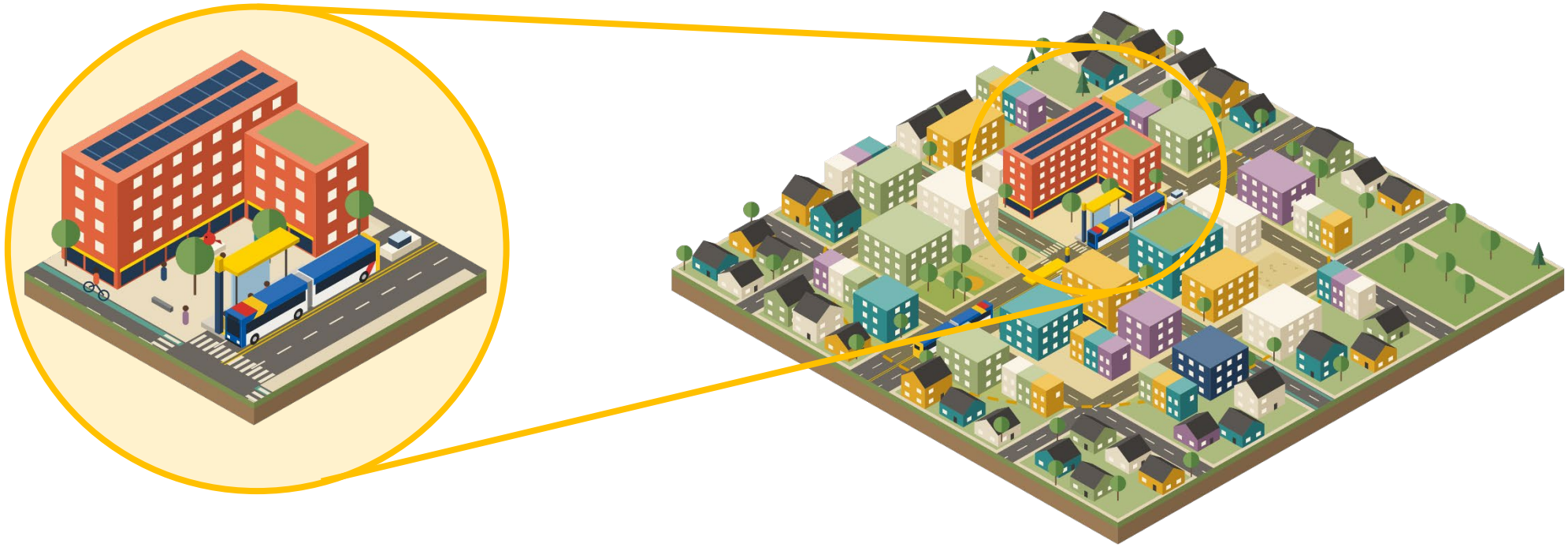
- In addition to the TOD Policy, Council staff needs clear procedures and leadership direction to maintain organizational alignment around TOD.
- The Council's HRA powers can be used for housing and redevelopment projects which provide a direct TOD benefit. The Council needs to provide direction around when and how to exercise HRA authorities to advance TOD.
- State bond dollars pose a substantial barrier to effective TOD implementation in the region's station areas.
- Lack of affirmative TOD authority in statute limits staff's ability to consistently support local partners and streamline project delivery.

Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC)

TOD is a development within a TOC.

TOD

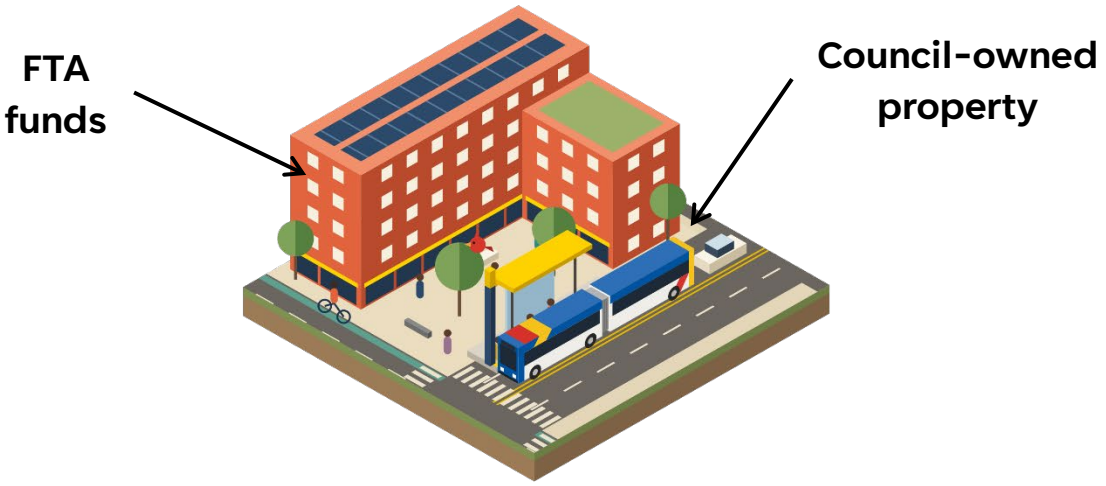
TOC

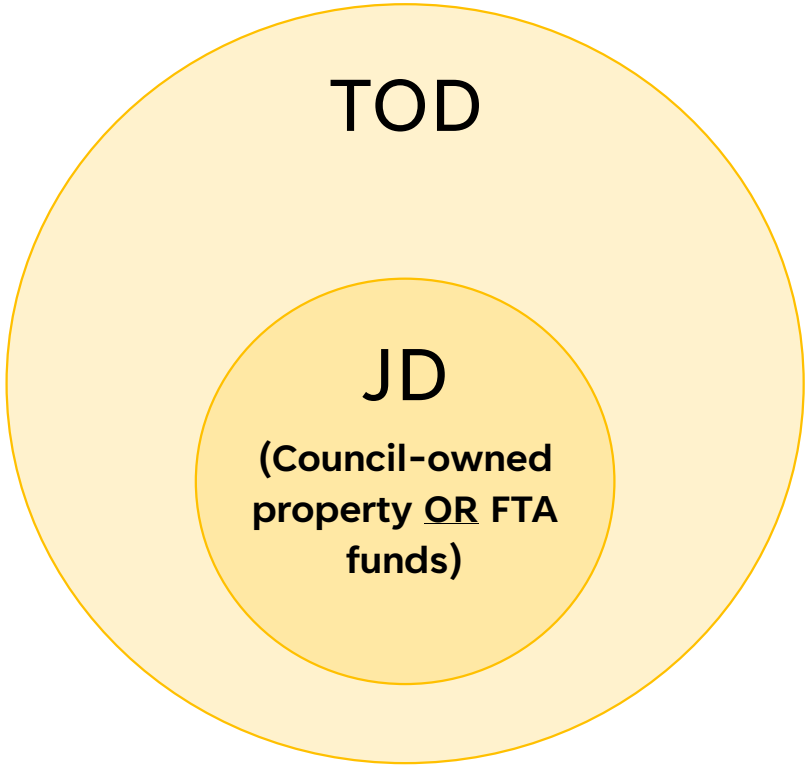


Joint Development (JD)

JD is TOD project that uses Council-owned property or FTA funds.

TOD=JD





TOD Policy Goals – Existing (2013)



TOC Policy Objectives – Recommended



TOC Policy Strategies

EXISTING/ CLARIFIED



Integrate TOD. Integrate TOD in transit planning, delivery, and operations.

EXISTING/ CLARIFIED



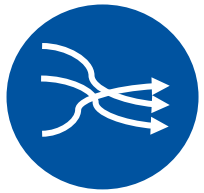
Advance Projects. Advance JD projects on Council-owned land.

EXISTING/ EXPANDED



Support Plans & Policy. Support efforts to implement transit-supportive station area plans and policies.

EXISTING



Align Council Work. Align Council plans, policies, and funding programs with Imagine 2050 and TOC objectives.

NEW



Measure Success. Measure progress toward the TOC objectives.

TOC Policy Strategies

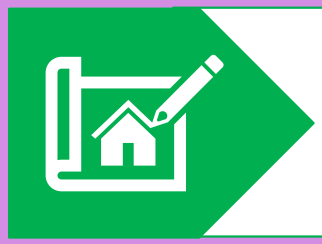
Integrate TOD in transit planning, delivery, and operations.

- **Integrate TOD**
- Advance Projects
- Support Plans & Policy
- Align Council Work
- Measure Success

COUNCIL PROCEDURE



Strategically structure and allocate transit capital and operating funds to enable TOD.



Plan, design, and operate transit service and facilities to support TOD.

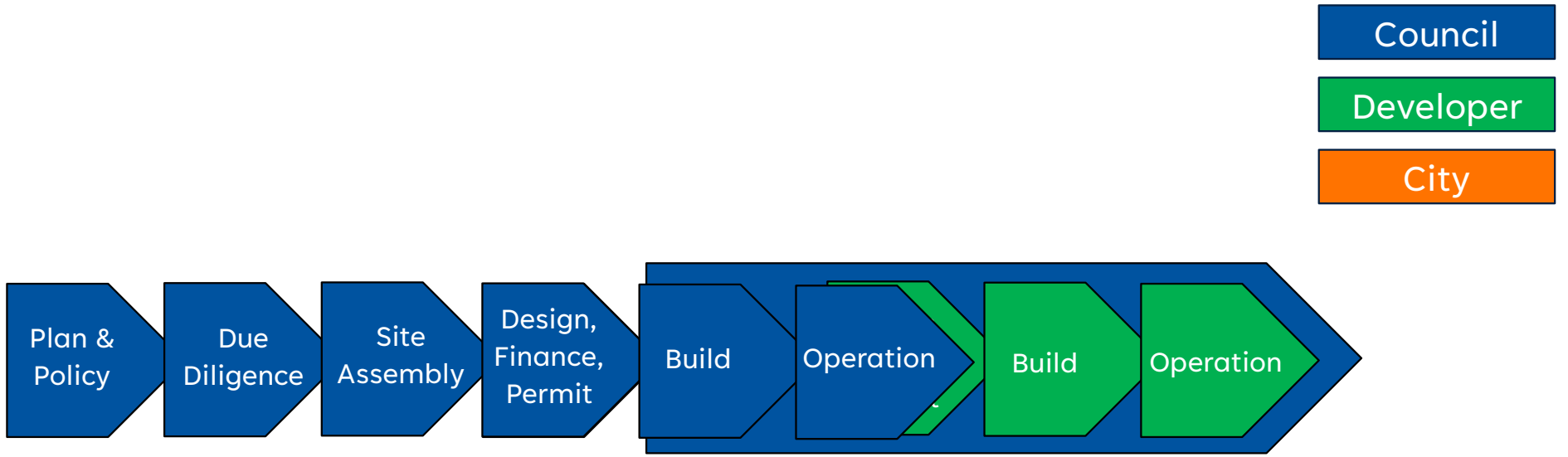


Strategically acquire land to maximize TOD potential.

TOC Policy Strategies

Development process alternatives

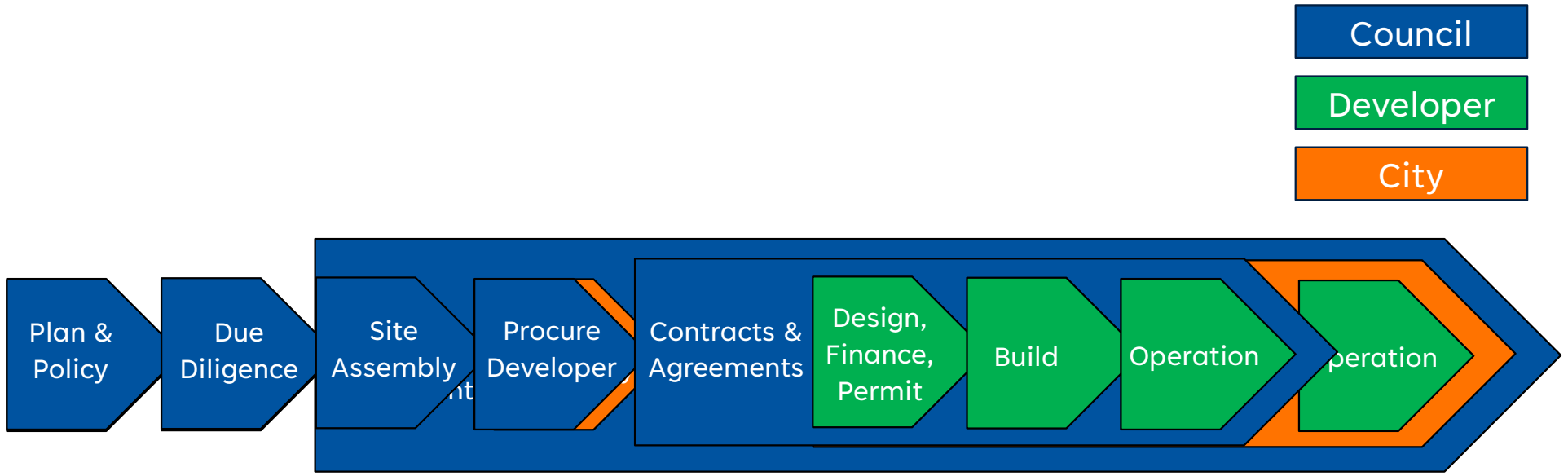
- Integrate TOD
- **Advance Projects**
- Support Plans & Policy
- Align Council Work
- Measure Success



TOC Policy Strategies

Development process alternatives

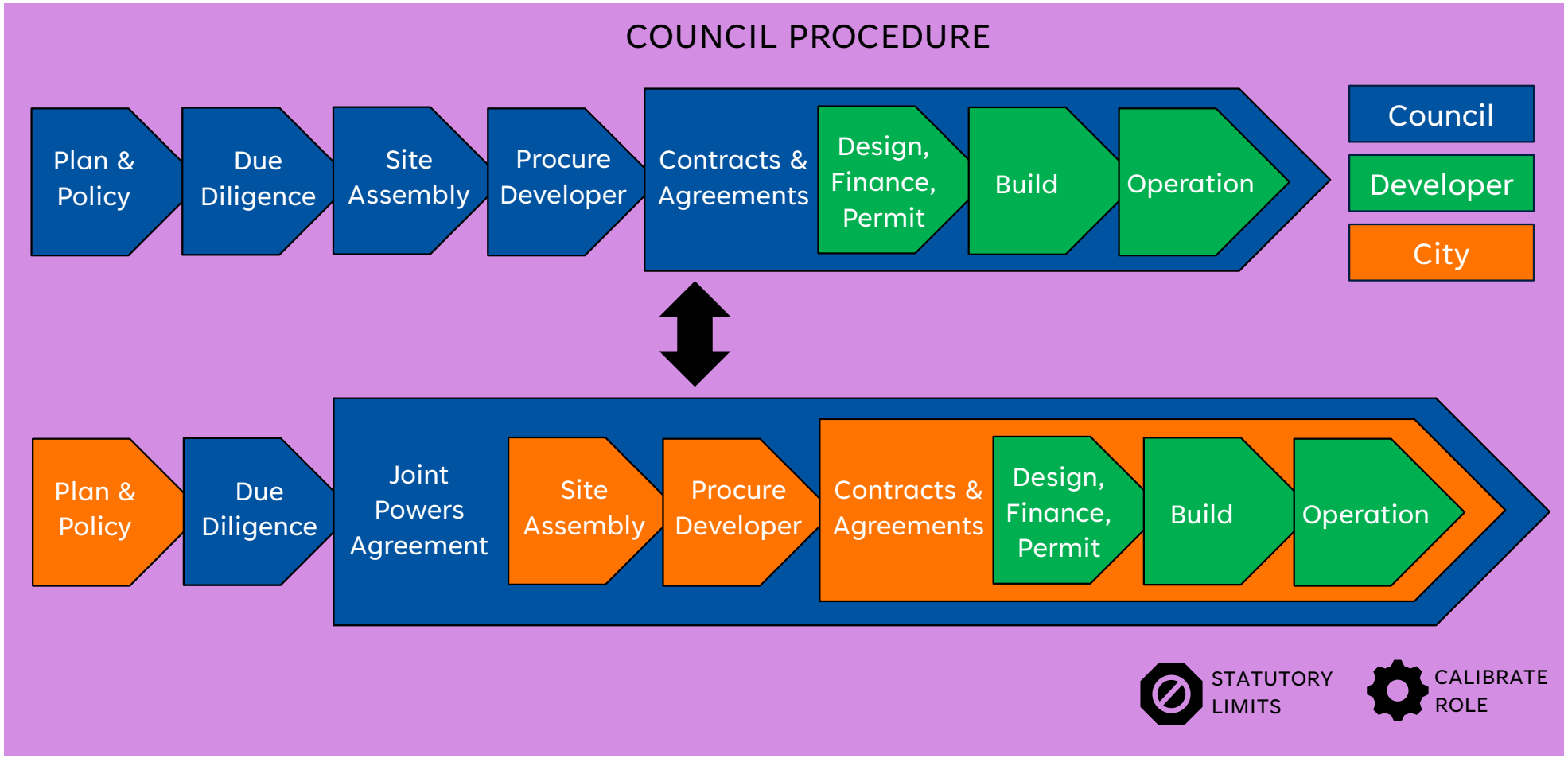
- Integrate TOD
- **Advance Projects**
- Support Plans & Policy
- Align Council Work
- Measure Success



TOC Policy Strategies

Calibrate to community capacity

- Integrate TOD
- **Advance Projects**
- Support Plans & Policy
- Align Council Work
- Measure Success



TOC Policy Strategies

Lease-first approach

Integrate TOD



Advance Projects

Support Plans & Policy

Align Council Work

Measure Success

- If practical and feasible, prioritize land and air rights leases to support development near/above transit. Leasing may create a stable, long-term revenue source that allows for:
  - Maintaining continuing control for transit purposes.
  - Ensuring future redevelopment is transit supportive.
- Where appropriate, allow for the sale of land and air rights.

STATUTORY LIMITS

TOC Policy Strategies

Leverage HRA authorities to advance JD projects

Integrate TOD



Advance Projects

Support Plans & Policy

Align Council Work

Measure Success

- Leverage the Council's HRA authorities and undertake a housing or redevelopment project that delivers a direct TOD benefit when doing so accomplishes one or more of the following goals:
  - Enables alignment of Council/local goals
  - Reduces project risk/cost
  - Accelerates project delivery
  - Improves project outcomes
- Embed process for engaging HRA and exercising authorities in Council Procedures.

TOC Policy Strategies

Support land assembly to advance JD projects

Integrate TOD



Advance Projects

Support Plans & Policy

Align Council Work

Measure Success

- Where land fragmentation prevents or complicates development, Council should consider selling, acquiring, or exchanging land to enable transit-supportive development.

STATUTORY LIMITS

TOC Policy Strategies

Support/lead transit-supportive station area plans and policies

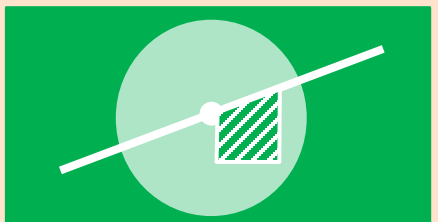
- Integrate TOD
- Advance Projects
- **Support Plans & Policy**
- Align Council Work
- Measure Success

CONTINUE



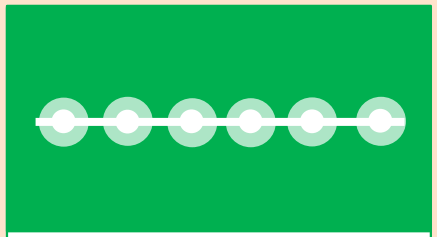
Connect partners to federal, state, and local funding and programs to support plans and policies.

ADD



Support/lead planning and policy in areas around Council-owned property.

CALIBRATE ROLE



Support/lead station area planning along transitways.

CALIBRATE ROLE

TOC Policy Strategies

Align Council work with TOC objectives and provide expertise

- Integrate TOD
- Advance Projects
- Support Plans & Policy
- **Align Council Work**
- Measure Success

PROGRAMS	EXAMPLES: Comp Plan Review, LCA Programs, Regional Solicitation, Anti-Displacement Framework Task Force
POLICIES	EXAMPLES: Transitway Advancement, Real Estate, Sources of Revenue, Use of Council Property, Affordable Housing
RESOURCES	EXAMPLES: TOD Guide, Imagine 2050 Metrics, Development Trends Report/App, Public Parcels, Tax Base Analysis

IMAGINE 2050

TOC Policy Strategies

Develop and track metrics for success

Integrate TOD

Advance Projects

Support Plans & Policy

Align Council Work

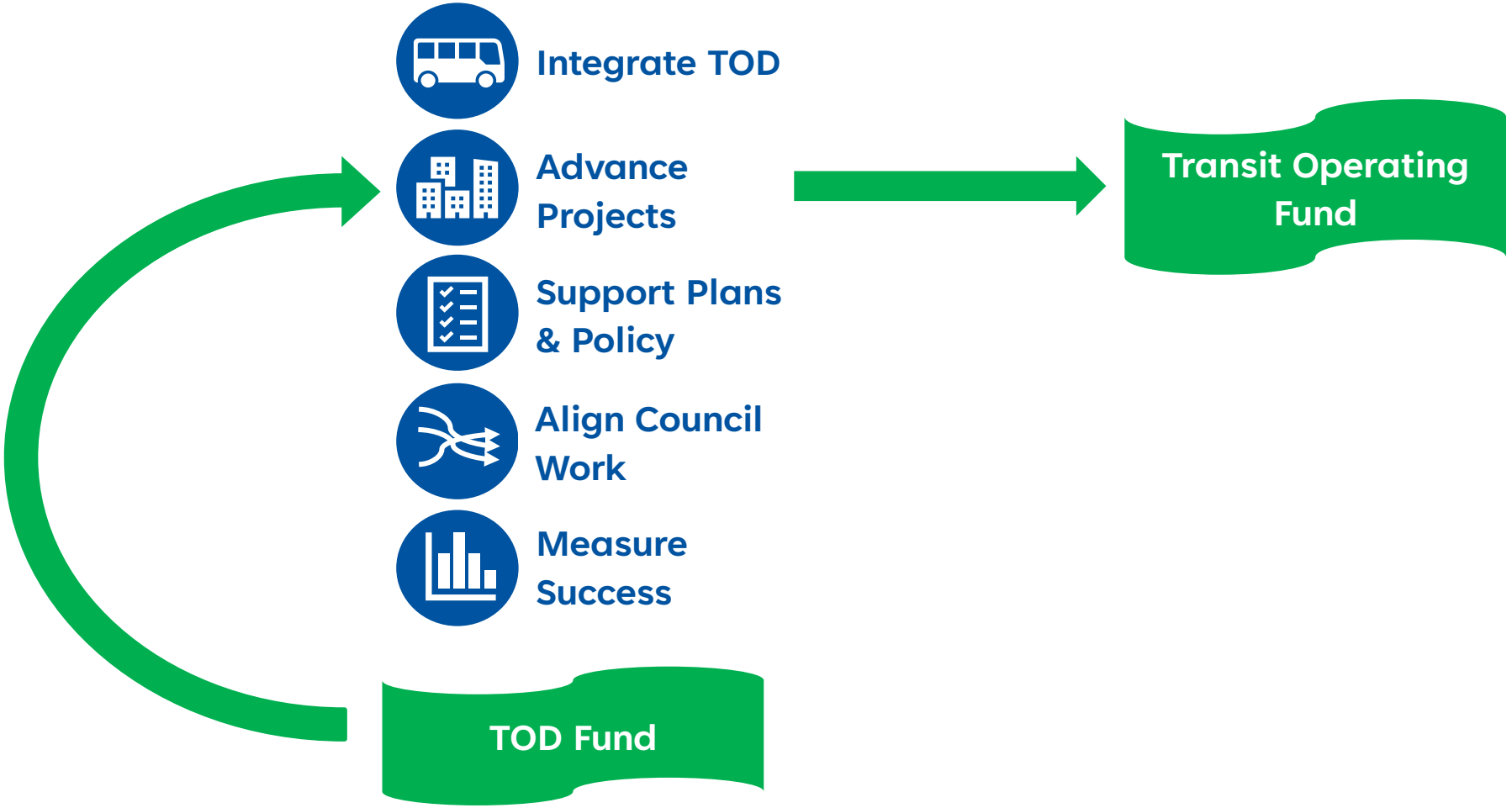


Measure Success

- Develop regional TOC metrics
- Support development of related metrics – Anti-displacement, Affordable Housing, Transit Access, etc.
- Develop Joint Development (JD) portfolio metrics
- Rely on quantitative measures when possible
- Consider metrics related to project delivery to inform process improvements

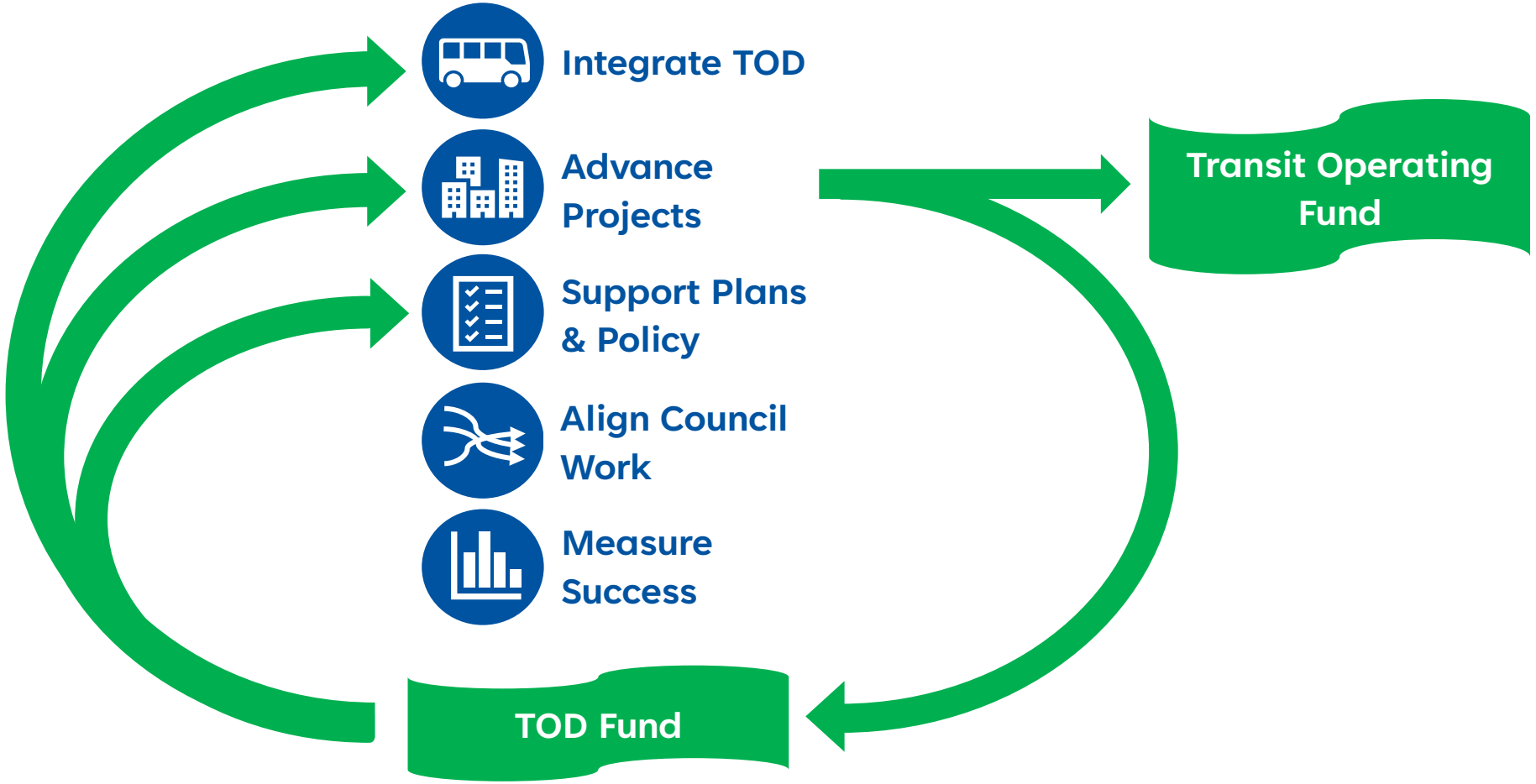
TOC Policy Strategies

Funding status quo



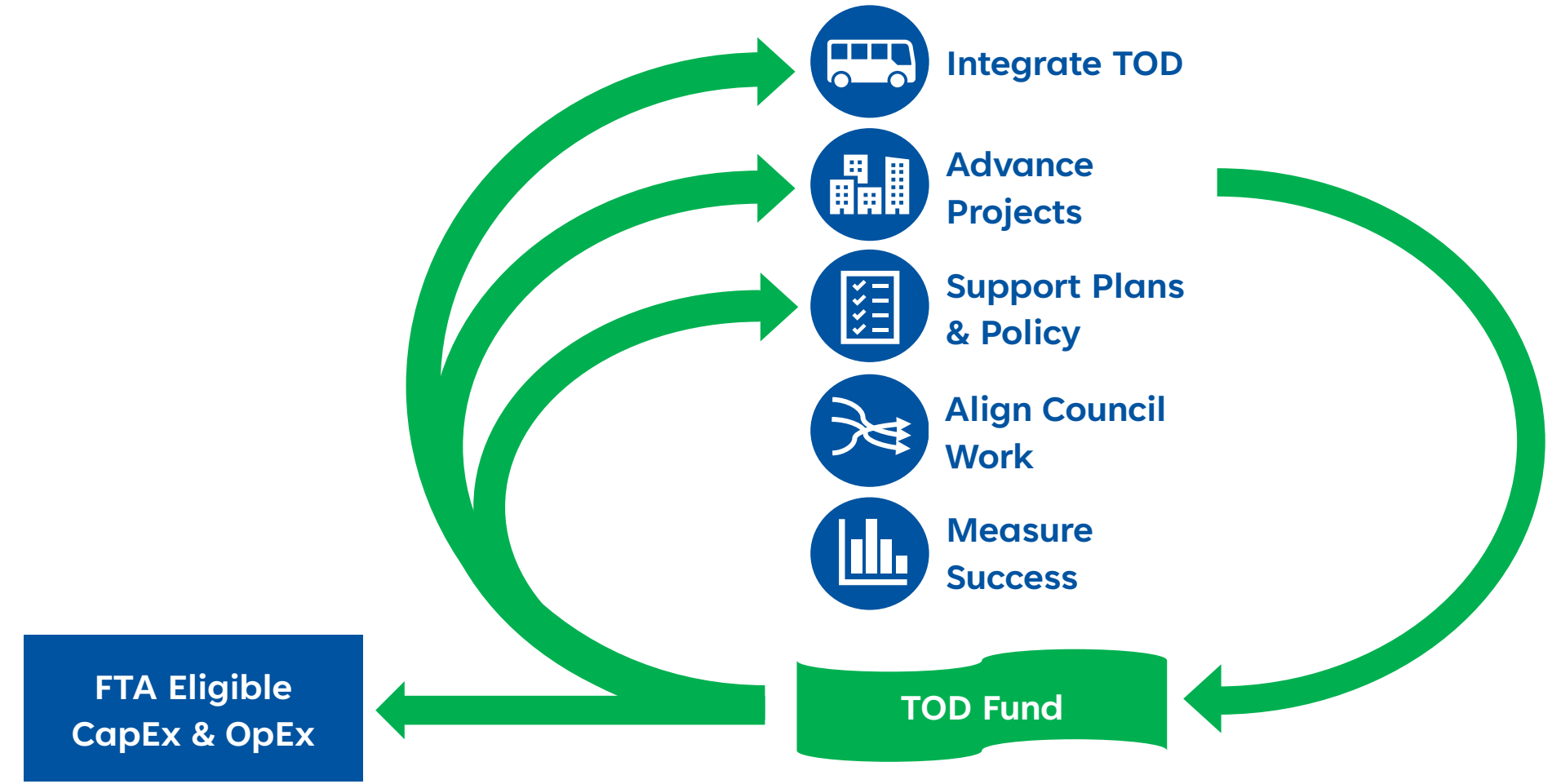
TOC Policy Strategies - Funding

Funding Alt. 1: Re-invest portion of development proceeds to advance TOD strategies

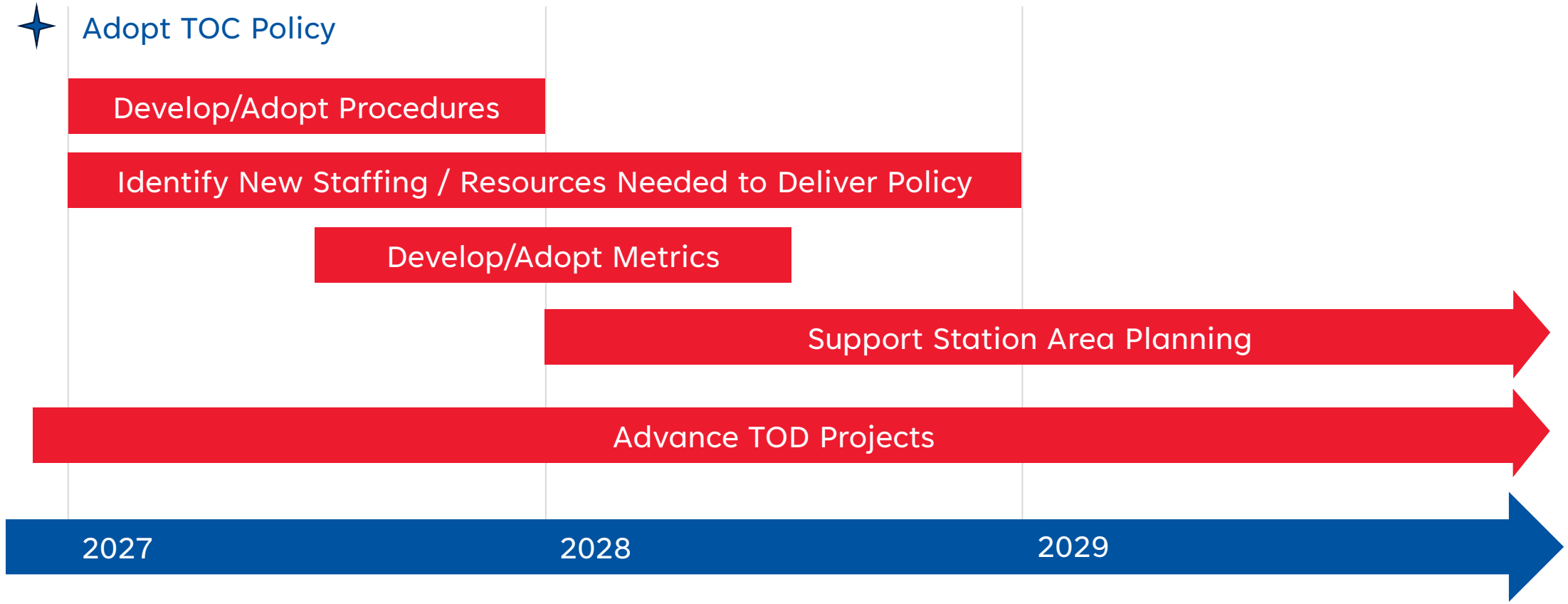


TOC Policy Strategies – Funding (Recommended)

Funding Alt. 2: Open TOD fund to FTA-eligible capital & operating expenses



Implementation Timeline



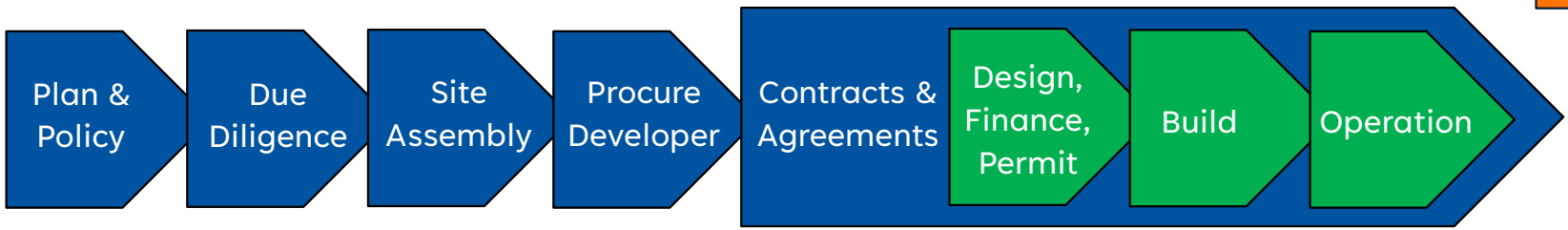
Statutory Challenges

- CHALLENGE 1: Council lacks express authority to integrate development around transit stations.
  - Affordable housing is the primary exception. Redevelopment is also allowed in cases of blight prevention/removal.
- CHALLENGE 2: $1 of State Bond Proceeds for a project prevents private use for the entire project, indefinitely.

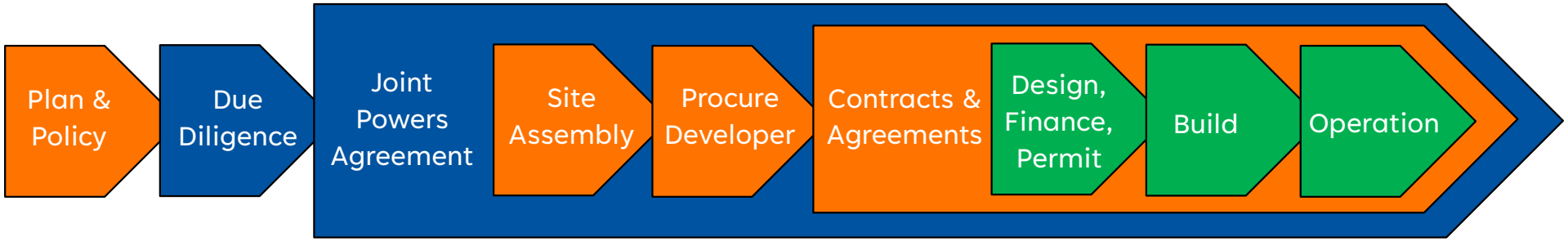
TOD Challenge 1 – Express Authority

Council
Developer
City

☑ Housing
⚠ Mixed-Use
⚠ Commercial



☑ Housing
☑ Mixed-Use
☑ Commercial

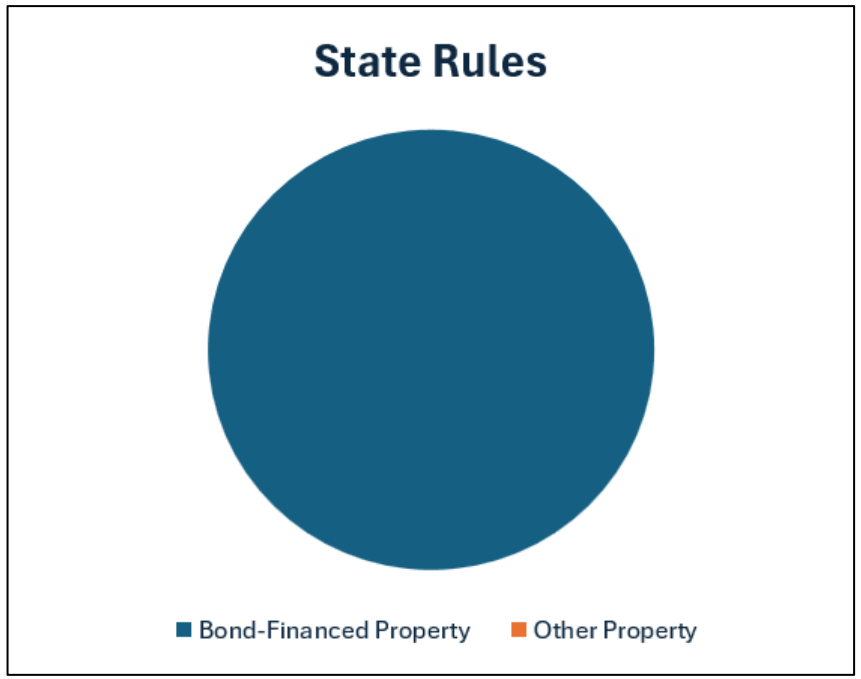


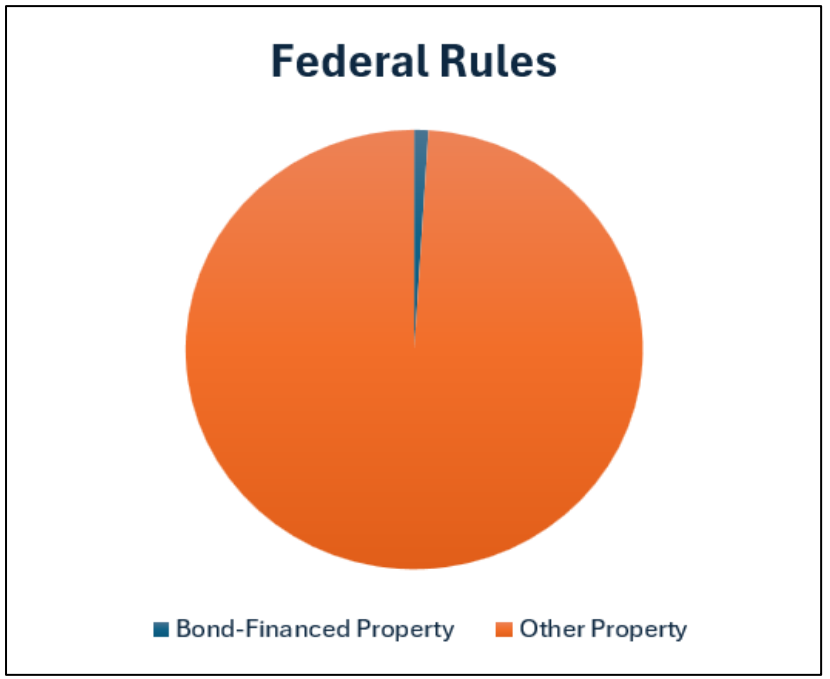
TOD Challenge 1 – Express Authority

- **CHALLENGE 1:** Council lacks express authority to integrate development around transit stations.
- **SOLUTION:** Seek affirmative authority to integrate jobs, housing, retail, and services in and around transit stations.
  - Allow long-term leases.
  - Allow Council to assemble land when land fragmentation is a barrier.

TOD Challenge 2 – State Bonds

- CHALLENGE 2: $1 of State Bond Proceeds for a project prevents private use for 100% of project, indefinitely. Applies to TOD, incidental use, and mobility hubs.





TOD Challenge 2 – State Bonds

- CHALLENGE 2: $1 of State Bond Proceeds for a project prevents private use for 100% of project, indefinitely. Applies to TOD, Incidental Use, Mobility Hubs.
  - Council is a unique recipient of State Bond Proceeds.
    - State bonds make up a small share of project finances.
    - Transit depends on closely integrated private use/development to function effectively and efficiently.

TOD Challenge 2 – State Bonds

- **CHALLENGE 2:** $1 of State Bond Proceeds for a project prevents private use for 100% of project, indefinitely. Applies to TOD, Incidental Use, Mobility Hubs.
- **SOLUTION:** Seek statutory exception allowing Council to implement Federal allocation rules when determining State Bond Financed Property.

Summary

- TOC Objectives and Strategies build on Imagine 2050 and Metro Transit Forward and reflect stakeholder feedback and national best practice.
- Some TOC Strategies are limited by lack of express statute.
- We are working on potential proposals to remove barriers that prevent a mix of uses near transit.



Synthesis and Recommendations



Green Line, East Bank Station

(Image source: Innovative Structural Solutions)

Questions/Discussion

Thank you!

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