

## **TRI-STATE TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN ONE REGION FUNDERS' GROUP**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Grants available to promote development near transit hubs**

Today the Tri-State Transportation Campaign and the One Region Funders' Group announced a community assistance grant program to help municipalities develop more equitable, sustainable, and transit-friendly communities. The grant initiative builds upon an initial set of philanthropic investments awarded by the One Region Funders' Group in the spring of 2009.

The program intends to encourage transit oriented development, or mixed use development within a fourth to half mile of a train or bus station, by offering financial support to municipalities ready to address the linkages between affordable housing, energy efficiency and equitable development near transit stations. Up to ten small grants will be awarded to communities in downstate New York (specifically Westchester County, Long Island, and New York City), Connecticut (with a preference given to municipalities in Fairfield and New Haven Counties), and northern New Jersey.

"We've seen during this recession that having to rely on a car can cause financial hardship and even price residents out of their neighborhoods," said Karen Brown, vice president for programs at the Fairfield County Community Foundation. "This grant program will help build places where residents have affordable, convenient housing and transportation choices."

"Equitable transit oriented development is an integral tool to combat suburban sprawl and stop the destruction of open space," said Helen Chin, program officer at the Surdna Foundation. "These grants will help create diverse neighborhoods that offer convenient access to jobs, stores, schools, and services for people regardless of their income, race, age, or ability."

"Investing in our downtowns and around transit hubs keeps dollars on Main Street and keeps the cost of public services low," said Nicole Chevalier, program director at the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation. "This program will fund projects that are smart both for the environment and for Connecticut communities' bottom line."

“More and more communities have learned that strong downtowns with good transit access help quality of life, and are especially attractive to young people and empty nesters,” said Catherine Marsh, executive director of the Westchester Community Foundation. “This program will strengthen and revitalize our important town centers.”

“These projects form the foundation of the funders’ collaborative work to promote sustainable and equitable development around transit hubs throughout the region,” said Pat Jenny, program director for Community Development and the Environment at the New York Community Trust. “We are interested in repeating the success of the first round of grant in promoting diverse and walkable residential communities.”

“We were proud to award grants to Wyandanch Rising and Ronkonkoma Hub during the first round of grants, two transit oriented development projects that can be game changers for the Long Island region,” said Sol Marie Alfonso-Jones, program officer at the Long Island Community Foundation. “It is encouraging to see local leaders build upon this investment by winning state and federal grants and endorsements.”

In 2011, Wyandanch Rising (Brookhaven, NY) received a \$2 million federal transportation grant, and Ronkonkoma Hub (Babylon, NY) was endorsed by U.S. Senator Charles Schumer. Both were also named “transformative” projects by the Long Island Economic Development Council, and will compete for state economic development funds. In addition, TSTC/One Region grantee Stratford, CT received a \$250,000 state transit-oriented development grant this year.

“We are honored to be managing this innovative program and look forward to helping communities across the region promote more equitable and walkable communities near transit hubs,” said Kate Slevin, executive director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign.

Applicants will be evaluated based on a set of criteria including interest in growing in population and promoting sustainable development near transit hubs. Grants could support a variety of projects, including community ‘visioning’ processes that engage disparate stakeholders or technical expertise to help design transit oriented development projects.

The groups hope to create conditions and development outcomes that lead to more equitable, walkable and bike friendly environments, ultimately fostering a reduction in vehicle miles traveled and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

The requests for proposals are available on the Tri-State Transportation Campaign’s website [by clicking here](#). Grants will be awarded in spring 2012. More about the seven grants awarded in 2009 under the first program can be found at [www.tstc.org/tod](http://www.tstc.org/tod).

*The One Region Funders’ Group is a partnership of private funders from Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey learning and working together to advance and support transportation planning and reform in the Tri-State region. Foundations contributing*

*toward this initiative include Fairfield County Community Foundation, Ford Foundation, Fund for the Environment and Urban Life, Long Island Community Foundation, New York Community Trust, Rauch Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Surdna Foundation, Emily Hall Tremain Foundation, and Westchester Community Foundation.*

*The Tri-State Transportation Campaign (TSTC) is a non-profit organization working towards a more balanced, transit-friendly and equitable transportation system in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut.*

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