

National Council  
of Negro Women, Inc.  
presents a citizen's guide  
to developing

# Childcare Services at Transit Stations



Funded by U.S. Department of  
Transportation,  
Federal Transit Administration



# NCRW

Improving the  
quality of life for  
African American  
women and their  
families



The National Council of Negro Women, Inc. was founded in 1935 by Mary McLeod Bethune as a national organization to advance opportunities and improve the quality of life for African-American women, their families and communities.

In the intervening seventy years, NCNW has grown into a multi-faceted, non-profit organization, fulfilling its mission through research, advocacy and community-based services in the U.S. and Africa.

This booklet was written in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), to assist communities in the development of childcare services at transit stations. This booklet explains how community organizations, local officials and transit agencies can partner to plan, fund, and build these facilities.

## Co-locating childcare and transit

Co-locating childcare and transit can mean added convenience for families as they meet the demands on their time, energy and funds. Across the nation, there is a growing need for childcare services. When access to childcare and transportation to work are physically adjacent, families benefit.

The flexible funding provisions of the Federal transit law allow transportation projects to include community services such as daycare and health care facilities when they are physically and functionally related to the transportation project. Such community services strengthen the character and social cohesion of a community, provide needed services, reduce travel time, and boost transit ridership.

## Women's Travel to Work

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, in 1995, only half of the 21 million U.S. infants, toddlers and preschoolers under the age of six were enrolled in childcare. One third of poor and unemployed women identified lack of childcare as a barrier to their participation in the labor force.

Studies show that trip chaining (combining a work trip with dropping off the children at daycare or school or stopping at local businesses for errands) has a significantly greater impact on women. During their work commute, women are five times more likely than

men to perform morning childcare stops and over three times more likely to conduct child-related evening stops. The presence of on-site childcare at transit centers can dramatically reduce the total vehicle miles traveled by women workers. Because of the convenience and time saving, women may be able to consider job opportunities that were previously out of reach.



The purpose of the Federal transit law is not simply to fund capital and operating costs of transit systems. It is to move people. More generally, the purpose is to improve the quality of life in urban and rural communities through the use of

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the U.S. and beyond. NCES is located in the U.S. Dept. of Education and the Office of Educational Research & Improvement.



transit, in recognition of transportation as the lifeblood of communities. The FTA uses joint development as a tool for improving the quality of life in communities.



Kansas City  
Childcare Center  
39th & Troost  
Metro Center  
KC, MO

# Creating Partnerships for Development

The National Council of Negro Women and the FTA encourage participatory planning to link transit and community resources. According to the National Child Care Information Center, public-private partnerships are urgently needed to improve access to childcare throughout the country. As no one sector or group can effectively address the need, it is important to pool resources. Increased access to quality childcare is a high priority to assist families in the transition from welfare to work.

Committed persons, forming partnerships to lead the development process, can achieve better personal mobility and quality of life for community residents.

Representative partnerships ensure that the 'public interest' is served -- that decisions reflect community consensus, health and licensing regulations are met, parents are informed, and children are given quality care. This involves the transit operator, a potential non-profit or public daycare provider, and local and state officials who license such providers. It may also involve charities or foundations or governmental funders who supplement the resources of the day care provider, since fees from day care are seldom sufficient to underwrite development costs.

From the outset, the partnership should focus on locations that meet both transit and land use objectives that are suitable for providing day care.



Other considerations include:

- proximity to residential uses or major employers or major transit transfer points
- existing and future travel demand
- integration of transit and daycare to maximize convenience and safety
- high quality architectural and/or urban design
- potential for spin-off economic development
- project financing capabilities of both the transit operator and the day care provider

Tamien Childcare Center, Santa Clara VTA, San Jose, CA



# Funding Joint Development

Federal transit law provides the statutory basis for joint development. The law authorizes joint development of facilities that enhance the effectiveness of and are physically or functionally related to public transportation. Such joint development must enhance economic development or incorporate private investment such as commercial and residential development. Any person or entity that occupies space in a joint development facility has to pay a reasonable share of the costs of the facility or improvement through rental payments, common area maintenance fees or other means.

Eligible expenses of joint development may include:

- property acquisition;
- demolition of existing structures;
- site preparation;
- utilities relocation and/or construction;
- constructing walkways and bicycles lanes for access to public transportation;
- constructing lighting and landscaping, open space;
- constructing space for community service facilities such as day care facilities.

"Federal transit law is more than just a tool for building highways or purchasing buses. It gives transit agencies an opportunity to take federal dollars and integrate them into building communities."

Ronald L. Barnes, President, Central Ohio Transit Authority



# Beginning the Joint Development Process

In urbanized areas, local elected officials and transportation agencies carry out transportation planning under the auspices of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Typically, a twenty-year Regional Transportation Plan is developed along with a short range (3 to 5 year) Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

Under Federal law and regulations, metropolitan transportation plans must be relatively specific and take into account land use and development plans as well as social, economic and environmental impacts.



For transportation projects to be approved and funded by the FTA, they must exhibit the principle of integration of transportation and land use. This principle underlies the concept of joint development. Joint development projects must be in the TIP.

The partnership establishes its own decision-making process, so that responsibilities and authorities for making decisions about the project are clear. These agreements are contained in a document called a joint development agreement. FTA reviews and approves this document.

Fruitvale Transit Village, Oakland, CA



The partnership agrees on a “vision” for the project. Based on community priorities, written and graphic descriptions of the “vision” indicate the desired outcome in broad terms, how the project will address community needs and create new opportunities. The vision description indicates the general nature of the project, and the approach to be taken.

By coordinating with the metropolitan planning organization and transit agency, the partnership works to incorporate the project into the TIP. The partnership confirms and refines community priorities for the project and documents these in a needs assessment that covers the demand for childcare, transportation services, employment, health care services, etc. in the area.



## **Linden Transit Center, Columbus, OH**

The quantitative needs assessment process for this Columbus transit center revealed that the demand for childcare was so great as to require a 24-hour center. The transportation analysis indicated that Linden should become a major transfer point. An employment pattern study showed that Linden was an area of high unemployment. It showed the need for local job training and an employment resource center. In addition, health care and retail centers were found to be lacking in the vicinity, prompting a recommendation to add these to the transit center project.

The needs assessment was conducted by Urban Growth Development Corporation, a non-profit real estate development corporation. The local sponsor was the transit agency, Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA).



Gathering information for the needs assessment can be done in various ways. The transit operator can perform the needs assessment. Public workshops, focus groups, and surveys are other good ways to exchange ideas, discuss possibilities and gather thoughts and opinions. Public meetings can be conducted by the transit agency, a consulting firm, or the partnership.

At one Columbus, OH workshop, the needs assessment reflected citizen statements regarding not only the shortage of neighborhood childcare services, but concerns for personal safety, a desire for a police substation, and an improved street environment.

These citizens stated that a system of sidewalks should be provided for parents to walk along the street to the childcare center and the transit station, and to provide a direct link to adjacent employment sites. They mentioned the need for canopies and other weather protection. They stressed the importance of good urban design to make the scale and quality of the outdoor spaces comfortable, pleasant, safe, and accessible to parents wheeling strollers or to persons with disabilities.

Childcare considerations included the number and ages of children to be served and licensing requirements.

In Columbus, proposals from childcare providers were solicited. Firms' proposals detailed the following:

- Business experience operating a licensed childcare facility;
- Demonstrated experience in caring for children ranging in ages from infants and toddlers through five years;





- Financial capability to equip, and insure the facility;
- Qualifications to meet licensing requirements as childcare providers according to state, Federal and local codes.

The needs assessment for Linden Transit Center in Columbus included the geographic market to be served, travel forecasts, socioeconomic assessment including available public and private assistance to families, market demand for childcare by age, market rates for childcare, competition by childcare providers, and the quality of care to be offered.

Travel forecasts should include travel patterns of workers in the community, trip generation rates, transit share, and travel times.

The needs assessment serves as the basis for the project program. The program is a complete and detailed document that includes project goals and objectives, project components, the attributes of each component, a budget and schedule, as well as a description of the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved in the project.

Child-scaled windows in the wall and doors in childcare center in Kansas City, MO



# Project Design and Construction

Once a proposed transit project is included in a metropolitan plan and TIP, plans for development in the station areas should begin in earnest. Typically, the transit operator will work with the provider to determine space needs within the transit facility for day care. The transit operator will usually hire the architect and engineering firm(s). A quality, developmentally appropriate childcare facility is a complex job, requiring specialized knowledge relating to the needs of children. Therefore, prior to being hired, the architectural team should demonstrate their experience and their understanding of the “different” scale of spaces required for children. They should have a working knowledge of child development, licensing requirements, and childcare center operations.

The transit operator will develop the construction budget, the finance plan, the construction schedule and let the bids for construction and undertake the construction. The day care provider will typically lease finished space (which may have been designed for the day care providers specific needs and wants). The other approach is for the day care provider to lease generic space that the day care provider then completes to make it suitable for day care use by installing its own tenant finishes. In both cases, the day care provider installs all furniture, fixtures and equipment which is unique to offering day care services from its own funds.



# Schematic design

If well designed, the childcare center's physical environment contributes to a child's development, and supports educational and operational goals. The facility design must take into account age, number of children, group size, curriculum, square footage required by local and state laws, and the range of activities to occur in the facility. In addition, there are special design considerations: sink and toilet heights, door locations, floor surfaces, window covering, lighting, and acoustics, to name a few.

The childcare environment should promote a child's interaction with space, materials and people. It should provide teachers and care givers with a functional and easy to use environment, supportive of work and play with the children.

# Final design

Final design involves preparation of construction drawings and specifications, cost estimates and schedules, obtaining approvals of the design by authorities having jurisdiction, and issuing contract documents for bid by construction contractors.

# Licensing and Occupancy

Near the completion of construction, a request should be made to the state and local childcare licensing authorities, as well as to other authorities having jurisdiction, to visit the construction site and provide comments and ultimately approval. Once construction is complete, licensing and occupancy permits are obtained, the project is ready for occupancy.

Louis Stokes Rapid Transit Station, Cleveland, OH



# Service considerations

According to the Child Welfare League of America, comprehensive child day care, incorporating child development, nutrition, health and family services, can play a significant role in strengthening and supporting families. The three questions most often asked about childcare by parents are:  
Can I get it? Can I trust it? Can I afford it?

Through transit, the Federal Transit Administration promotes access to childcare. In so doing, it helps parents answer these and other questions. The provision of childcare services at transit centers is a responsive transportation planning initiative, stimulated by community need.

The Census Bureau reports that low-income parents, who pay for childcare, pay an average of 25 percent of their income for that care. In contrast, non-low income parents pay an average of 6 percent.

NCNW found that the following elements lead to quality service:

- Good interaction between childcare providers and parents
- Responsible adult supervision of childcare center
- Teaming with health care experts so that health care and childcare are part of the same service methodology
- Community nurse services are available to the center
- Guidance to families regarding financial services, as the new welfare law established funding for families that qualify.

## **Additional childcare service aspects to consider:**

- Staff training - Training is key to providing quality childcare. There are 13 functional areas required for a credential from the Child Development Associate (CDA) program.
- Compensation - A critical element of program quality is a wage and benefit package that contributes to staff retention.

As an example, the military links wages and advancement to training, education and performance.

- Certification and Inspection - Standards and oversight provide consistent quality and safety.
- Accreditation - Meeting accreditation requirements and being accredited by the National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is important to ensure quality childcare service.
- Sliding Fee Scales - Quality care costs more than most parents can afford to pay. But a sliding fee scale with assistance of federal vouchers and other state and city supports means low income families can qualify for services.

Linden Transit Center, Columbus, OH





Tamien Childcare Center, Santa Clara VTA, San Jose, CA

Louis Stokes Rapid Transit Station, Cleveland, OH





# The future is in our hands

The National Council of Negro Women, Inc., its 250 community-based sections, 32 national affiliates and its network of more than fifty associated organizations, appreciate the Federal Transit Administration's efforts to work collaboratively with us to develop child-care services at transit facilities.

Recent changes in the nation's Welfare-to-Work system require a determined response on our part. We must aggressively pursue public/private partnerships to generate more opportunities for childcare and employment.

Joint development of transportation and childcare services is a vital tool in our kit. Our efforts to create joint development in our communities will help families make the transition from welfare to work.

For more information on placing childcare within transit facilities, check the NCNW website at [www.ncnw.org](http://www.ncnw.org). Write or call NCNW at 633 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004. Tel. 202-737-0120 / Fax 202-737-0476, or contact your regional Federal Transit Administration office at [www.fta.dot.gov](http://www.fta.dot.gov).

# Case Studies

The following case studies illustrate a variety of sites, partnerships, and funding arrangements which were successful in meeting the needs of working families and transit riders.

Easton Transit Center, Columbus, OH



# Linden Transit Center

Mother's Helper Childcare

Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA)

Columbus, OH

The Linden Transit Center is a prime example of how public/private partnerships changed a depressed area and improved the quality of life for low income families.

Opening in fall 1999, Central Ohio's South Linden Transit Center includes a bus depot, daycare center, children's health clinic, bank and a medical office. Kent Carson, spokesman for COTA, said, "The whole idea of the center is to respond to those who work first and second shifts." To help parents who work non-traditional hours, Mother's Helper Child Care and Service is working toward being a 24-hour facility.

The Central Ohio Transit Authority and the Urban Growth Corporation (a non-profit real estate developer), community leaders and residents formed a partnership. This partnership spearheaded the revitalization of "Four Corners" in Columbus, Ohio.

Urban Growth Corporation brought its experience in redeveloping forgotten neighborhoods. It partnered with local organizations and officials, private businesses and other entities. This partnership agreed upon a "vision" that engendered a vested interest in the success of the program.

COTA contracted with "Mother's Helper", a local provider of childcare services. Financial, healthcare, restaurant, and "mobility manager" services were added, providing employment opportunities to Linden area residents.

Through the Federal Livable Communities Initiative, COTA leveraged \$2M in federal funds against funds from foundations, local businesses, city and state government.

# Fruitvale Transit Village

Childcare services, Oakland, CA.

The San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit Authority (BART) worked with the Spanish Speaking Unity Council, a local community organization already working within the community, to develop the Fruitvale Transit Village.

This project was challenging because it revitalized an inner city low-income neighborhood through a multifaceted development project including childcare services, senior housing, shops, a job bank, a health clinic, restaurants, pedestrian areas, and parking. BART leveraged \$3 million in federal transit funds to generate \$6.6 million in loans and grants through the Enhance Enterprise Community program, \$5.4 million in HUD Section 202 Senior Housing grants, more than \$1 million from the City of Oakland Community Development Block Grant funds, and another \$2 million of funds from the City of Oakland itself.



# Tamien Childcare Center

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, San Jose, CA

The Tamien Childcare Center was constructed at the Tamien CalTrain and light rail stations in San Jose. Costing \$2.35M, the 9,600 square foot project was located on an underutilized site owned by Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA). The Tamien Child Care Center is operated by Bright Horizons Family Solutions under contract to VTA. It accommodates 137 children from six weeks to 12 years old. Incentives were built into the program including rail and bus discounts, priority enrollment and tuition discounts for children of transit users. This collaboration was San Jose's first real working relationship between childcare and transit. The flexible funding provisions of the Federal transit law allowed FTA to provide partial funding for the project. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) provided funding as well.



# Louis Stokes Rapid Transit Station

Head Start Child Care Center  
Greater Cleveland Regional  
Transit Authority (GCRTA)  
Cleveland, OH



The Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority worked with the Council for Economic Opportunities of Greater Cleveland to involve community organizations, state, federal and local agencies, residents, and metropolitan planning associates to help develop its Head Start Child Care Center. The center offers child care to families as part of its Welfare-to-Work program. The private/public partnership between the Department of Health and Human Services, Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority, Cuyahoga County and Key Banks. This alliance provided opportunities for employment, childcare, health care and other services to meet the needs of community residents.

The Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority established a \$11.1 million dollar joint development project with the Council for Economic Opportunities of Greater Cleveland (CEOGC), a non-profit community service organization to develop a connecting walkway from Louis Stokes Rapid Transit Station (RTS) to the new child care facility. The Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority used its Urbanized Area Formula program for this joint development project which included land acquisition, site preparation and ground lease to develop the 'Connector' and provided the site for the Council for Economic Opportunities of Greater Cleveland to build the childcare facility.

# 39th & Troost MetroCenter, Kansas City, MO

Kansas City Childcare Center

The 39th and Troost Development was a joint venture between the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority and the KCMC Child Development Corporation. The center features a large indoor transit waiting space with a satellite police desk for the Kansas City Police Department, as well as a 5,100 square foot childcare facility for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years old.

Although the building is unique in combining the functions, the concept of the facility is simply, "Drop off your children at day-care and take the bus to work." The project was designed by Gould Evans Architects.



# Acknowledgements

The National Council of Negro Women, Inc.  
would like to acknowledge  
and thank the following community organizations,  
transit authorities, and public officials  
for their help in research  
and for sharing their experiences and stories.

## NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

National Council of Negro Women, Inc. staff and volunteers  
National Association for Human Development, Inc. for research

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Columbus Urban Growth Corporation  
The Greater Linden Development Corporation  
Spanish Speaking Unity Council  
Council for Economic Opportunities of Greater Cleveland  
KCMC Child Development Corporation

## TRANSIT AUTHORITIES

Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA)  
San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit Authority (BART)  
The Greater Cleveland Regional Transit (GCRTA)  
The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)  
Kansas City Area Transit Authority (KCATA)  
Jackson TN Transit Authority

## STATE, REGIONAL and LOCAL PUBLIC OFFICIALS

State and Regional Representatives, Mayors, City Councillors

## CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

Head Start Child Care Center - Cleveland, OH  
Head Start and Early Head Start - Oakland CA  
Mother's Helper Childcare - Columbus, OH  
Bright Horizons Children's Centers, Inc.. - San Jose, CA  
39th & Troost Metro Center, Childcare Center - Kansas City, MO

We would especially like to thank the FTA staff who  
participated in the development of this childcare guide.



This document is disseminated under the sponsorship of the Department of Transportation in the interest of information exchange. The United States Government assumes no liability for its contents or use thereof.

National Council of Negro Women, Inc.  
presents

A Citizen's Guide to Developing  
Childcare Services at Transit Stations

in cooperation with the

Federal Transit Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation

2005 (original)  
2007 version

