



**Testimony on
S4013 - Establishes "Enhanced Transit Village Program"
Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee**

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New Jersey Future thanks the Committee Chair and members for the opportunity to share our strong support for S4013 to create enhanced transit villages.

Last year the Legislature and Governor Murphy worked together to put NJTransit on decent financial footing by adopting the Corporate Transit Fee. S4013 would enable New Jersey to build on that investment by unlocking the huge potential for economic growth near stations, growing fare revenues, and helping towns create attractive transit neighborhoods they can be proud of.

New Jersey has the fourth largest domestic out-migration of any state except NY, CA, and ILL. Transit-oriented development, or TOD, can help reverse this because it has become so popular in our state. There are 153 municipalities with transit stations. In the decade between 2010 and 2020, these municipalities accounted for 68% – more than two-thirds – of statewide population growth. This was a huge increase from the previous decade when their population growth accounted for only one-quarter (28%) of statewide growth and...

The more people who live near transit, the more fare revenues NJTransit will receive. Many more people who live near transit use it - 17% of workers not working at home commuted by transit. Increasing the number of homes near transit stations will increase fare revenues for NJ Transit and help it become more financially sound.

Local officials need resources to plan for vibrant, walkable districts around their stations. S4013 would give them the planning assistance to successfully change their zoning to not only allow more homes but also to assess utilities and fiscal impacts, plan for transportation circulation and land uses including for high-quality plazas and public spaces, and of course, do public engagement.

We would like to work with bill sponsors to address a few issues with the bill:

- The Office of Planning Advocacy will need funding to provide planning assistance to towns. We estimate these costs range from \$50,000 - \$100,000 for a large parcel in a community, and perhaps more to address a complete TOD district. This initiative requires NJ Transit and the Economic Development Authority at the table with their expertise and resources.
- DOT will need more funding to provide the transportation improvements called for in the bill. The Governor's proposed budget cuts in half the funds allocated to DOT's local aid programs for

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Transit Villages and related bike and pedestrian programs. We need the Legislature to reverse these cuts and identify additional new funding for this program.

Voters support this kind of policy: A 2023 national poll, [Survey Finds Large Majorities Favor Policies to Enable More Housing | The Pew Charitable Trusts](#), shows that 81% of Americans support policies to allow apartments near train or bus stations or major job centers, and 77% believe this is a good reason to change local rules that limit housing.

Let's help other cities and towns with train stations become popular places to live, work, and visit, like downtown Somerville, Hoboken, downtown Princeton, and Jersey City. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We look forward to working with you to advance the bill.