



Should I Stay or Should I Go?

*How Effective Transit-Oriented Development
Can Lead to Positive Economic Growth
Without Displacing Latinos*

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Our Mission

UCLA Latino Policy & Politics Initiative (LPPI) is a comprehensive think tank that addresses the most critical domestic policy challenges facing communities of color in states and localities across the United States. LPPI leverages UCLA's cross-disciplinary strengths to create an enterprise-wide home for Latino social policy with expertise in over a dozen issue areas including civil rights, criminal justice, educational equity, health access, and voting and civic participation. LPPI fosters innovative research, leverages policy-relevant expertise, drives civic engagement, and nurtures a leadership pipeline to propel viable policy reforms that expand opportunity for all Americans. Learn more at: latino.ucla.edu.



Executive Summary

The UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Initiative (LPPI) conducted an analysis of Oakland California's Fruitvale Village, a multidimensional Transit Oriented Development (TOD)¹ in the city's largest Latino neighborhood.² To assess socioeconomic change, researchers looked at a selected set of variables, comparing outcomes for residents of the Fruitvale Village TOD and its immediate neighborhood to residents of similar census tracts in the Bay Area and in California at large. By comparing outcomes from 2000 and 2015, researchers found that **the socioeconomic status of Fruitvale residents improved while little change occurred in the neighborhood's racial/ethnic diversity.** The Fruitvale Village TOD outperformed comparison census tracts across four variables: the percentage of residents without a high school degree or GED (or similar diploma), the percentage of residents who have completed a BA, the percentage of residents who own homes, and the median household income. There were no statistically significant changes in the unemployment rate or median gross monthly rent. This study also suggests that these positive changes were not driven by gentrification although the changes were, in fact, similar in magnitude to changes experienced in the Bay Area's most rapidly gentrifying census tract. **This study indicates that community-driven economic development, including TOD, can produce positive benefits in a heavily Latino community.**



Fruitvale Station and the Unity Council

In the early 1990s the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Fruitvale Station in East Oakland had the second-highest crime rate of all the stations in the rail system. Middle-income families and the businesses targeting them moved to the Bay Area's suburbs, and retail vacancy rates in the area shot as high as 50 percent. As a response to these conditions, in 1991 BART, which seemed resigned to allow disinvestment in the area to continue, proposed the construction of a parking garage at Fruitvale Station (Chisholm 2002).

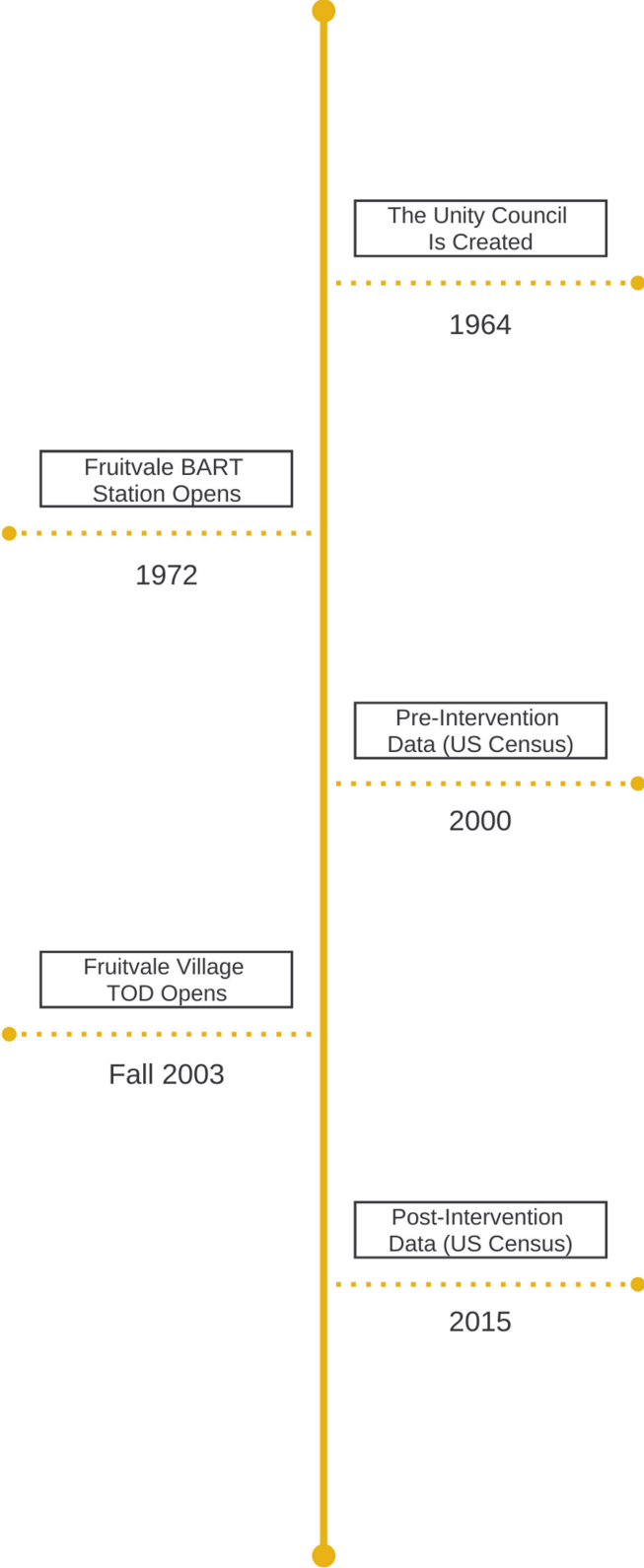
Residents and business owners in the Fruitvale neighborhood were not happy with the proposed location of the structure or its design. The Unity Council, a non-profit organization founded in 1967 in Alameda County to address the lack of substantive representation of Latinos in political and policy decisions, led the community opposition to BART's plans. Although the Unity Council had not previously engaged with BART, the group was well known for its community economic development portfolio, which included real estate acquisition and management.³ In response to the opposition, BART agreed that the Unity Council would serve as the conduit for community concerns and that area residents would be



Figure 1. Fruitvale Village TOD

incorporated into the redevelopment process (Sandoval and Herrera 2015). With funding from federal Community Development Block Grants and the US Department of Transportation, the Unity Council conducted a series of economic, traffic, and engineering studies to support the creation of a \$100 million mixed-use development (fig. 1). The resulting 257,000 square-foot Fruitvale Village TOD, which opened in late 2003, includes forty-seven housing units (ten of which are affordable housing units with rents set between \$486 and \$1,029), community services for seniors and youth, a Head Start center, a public library branch, small businesses, and a charter high school (Scully 2005).

Unity Council Timeline



Methodology

To assess the socioeconomic impact of the Fruitvale Village TOD, we employed matching, a statistical technique that allowed us to compare census tracts that, apart from the intervention being studied, were nearly identical. This technique also considers the timing of the intervention in relation to data collection.

To identify census tracts that were similar to the tract encompassing Fruitvale Village TOD (census tract 4061), we used data from the 2000 US Decennial Census to compile a similarity score index of three variables: race/ethnicity, median gross monthly rent, and median household income. Mathematically speaking, we took the square root of the sum of the squared differences across all the matching variables, as shown in figure 2.

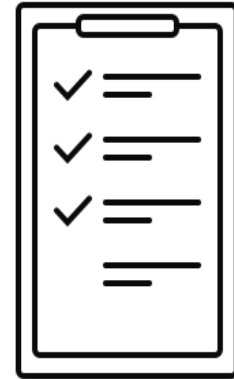
Figure 2.

$$\text{Euclidean Distance} = \sqrt{(\text{Latino}_A - \text{Latino}_B)^2 + (\text{Black}_A - \text{Black}_B)^2}$$

Figure 3 shows the similarity between a hypothetical census tract A, which is 25 percent Latino and 15 percent Black, and tract B, which is 26 percent Latino and 10 percent Black. The similarity score—the degree of similarity—is 0.051.

Figure 3.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Euclidean Distance} &= \sqrt{(0.25 - 0.26)^2 + (0.15 - 0.10)^2} \\ &= 0.051 \end{aligned}$$



We then developed two sets of similar census tracts: the first drawn from the nine-county Bay Area; the second from the entire state of California. Using the similarity score index, we identified the top 1 percent of matches in each set. We grouped the Bay Area matches by county. The statewide matches were all in Los Angeles County.

To assess the impact of the intervention, we constructed an outcome index comprising seven variables: race/ethnicity, median gross monthly rent, and median household income, plus home ownership, unemployment, residents without a high school diploma or GED (or similar diploma), and residents with a BA. By comparing data from the 2000 census with data from the 2015 American Community Survey for each of these variables, we measured the amount of socioeconomic change that had occurred in the Fruitvale Village TOD and each of the matches. To control for gentrification, we also compared the Fruitvale Village TOD to Uptown Oakland, the fastest gentrifying census tract in the Bay Area.

Bay Area Outcomes

In the Bay Area we compared the Fruitvale Village TOD to the 1,319 census tracts in the nine Bay Area counties. The top 1 percent of matches (twelve census tracts) were located in Contra Costa (six), Alameda (four), and Santa Clara (two) counties (fig. 4). An average for each variable was calculated for the matches within each county, producing outcomes for "Bay Area matches." These averages were averaged in turn, producing an outcome for the "Bay Area average." Table 1 shows the results for race/ethnicity.

Figure 4. Bay Area County Matches

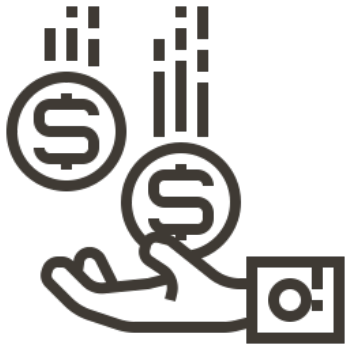


Table 1. Race/ethnicity for Fruitvale Village TOC and Bay Area Matches, 2000 to 2015

	Fruitvale Village TOD (%)	Average Alameda County Matches (%)	Average for Contra Costa County Matches (%)	Average for Santa Clara County Matches (%)	Bay Area Average (%)
Latinos					
2000	63.2	51.1	56.0	56.4	54.0
2015	62.3	56.3	66.8	44.8	58.2
Change	-0.9	+5.2	+10.8	-11.6	+4.2
Black					
2000	12.3	22.9	17.7	3.6	17.5
2015	7.9	14.9	12.9	5.4	12.2
Change	-4.4	-8.0	-4.8	+1.8	-5.3
Whites					
2000	11.9	8.0	12.8	24.2	12.7
2015	11.5	9.0	6.8	28.3	12.0
Change	-0.4	+1.0	-6.0	+4.1	-0.7
Asians/Pacific Islanders					
2000	9.7	14.1	9.2	12.5	11.8
2015	15.4	15.2	9.9	19.4	13.9
Change	+5.7	+1.1	+0.7	+6.9	+2.1

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Bay Area Outcomes



RACE/ETHNICITY, RENT, HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Over this study's fifteen-year period, two of the socioeconomic factors in the similarity score index experienced substantial change. Important for the purposes of this study is the fact that the Fruitvale Village TOD's Latino population remained almost unchanged, with less than a 1 percent decrease (table 1, previous page), yet median gross monthly rent saw an increase of 82.8 percent (appendix A, table 1a), and median household income increased by almost 50 percent (Appendix A, 1b). The Fruitvale Village TOD's increase in household income was substantially greater than the increase for the Bay Area average (47.2% versus 32.6%, respectively).

HOME OWNERSHIP AND UNEMPLOYMENT



Although home ownership rates decreased for the Bay Area average, the Fruitvale Village TOD experienced an 8.2 percent increase between 2000 and 2015 (table 2). This is especially remarkable given the negative impact on home ownership and mortgage availability that resulted from the Great Recession and the crises in housing availability and affordability in the Bay Area. The only other census tracts to experience a positive increase in home ownership were the two in Santa Clara County. Unemployment rates remained relatively unchanged, with Fruitvale Village TOD experiencing an increase of less than 1 percent. The Bay Area average saw a 0.2 percent decrease (appendix A, table 1c).

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



Two variables were examined to assess educational attainment: the percentage of residents without a high school diploma or GED (or similar diploma), and the percentage of residents with a BA. For both variables, the Fruitvale Village TOD outperformed the Bay Area average almost twofold (appendix A, tables 1d, 1e). In comparison to the Alameda County match, the county in which Fruitvale is located, the percentage of change for each of the two outcomes was more than double. Fruitvale Village TOD's percent change in percent of residents without a GED was a 12.1 percent decrease, compared to only a 6.2 percent decrease for the Bay Area average. Similarly, the change in percent of residents with a BA was a 13.3 percent increase in Fruitvale Village TOD versus 7.8 percent for Bay Area average.

Table 2. Change in home ownership for Fruitvale Village TOC and Bay Area Matches, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (%)	2015 (%)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD (%)	27.1	35.3	+8.2
Average Alameda County Matches (%)	32.6	24.4	-8.2
Average for Contra Costa County Matches (%)	48.8	45.9	-2.9
Average for Santa Clara County Matches (%)	15.8	26.2	+10.4
Bay Area Average (%)	36.5	33.4	-3.1

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Between 2000 and 2015 the Fruitvale Village TOD experienced substantial increases in home ownership, median household income, and educational attainment. All these increases were well above the Bay Area average. For rent and unemployment, Fruitvale Village TOD did not differ significantly from the matches.

DURING THIS PERIOD, THE LATINO POPULATION OF FRUITVALE VILLAGE REMAINED ALMOST UNCHANGED.

Statewide Outcomes

To compare the Fruitvale Village TOD with California statewide, we identified the top twelve matches in the 7,049 census tracts in the state in 2000 (fig. 5). Averages for each variable were calculated for these matches to determine the “statewide match.” All the matches are located in Los Angeles County. The racial/ethnic similarity between the Fruitvale Village TOD and the census tracts selected as statewide matches in Los Angeles County (table 4) reinforces the importance of community-driven economic intervention for the state’s Latino plurality.

Figure 5. Statewide Matches

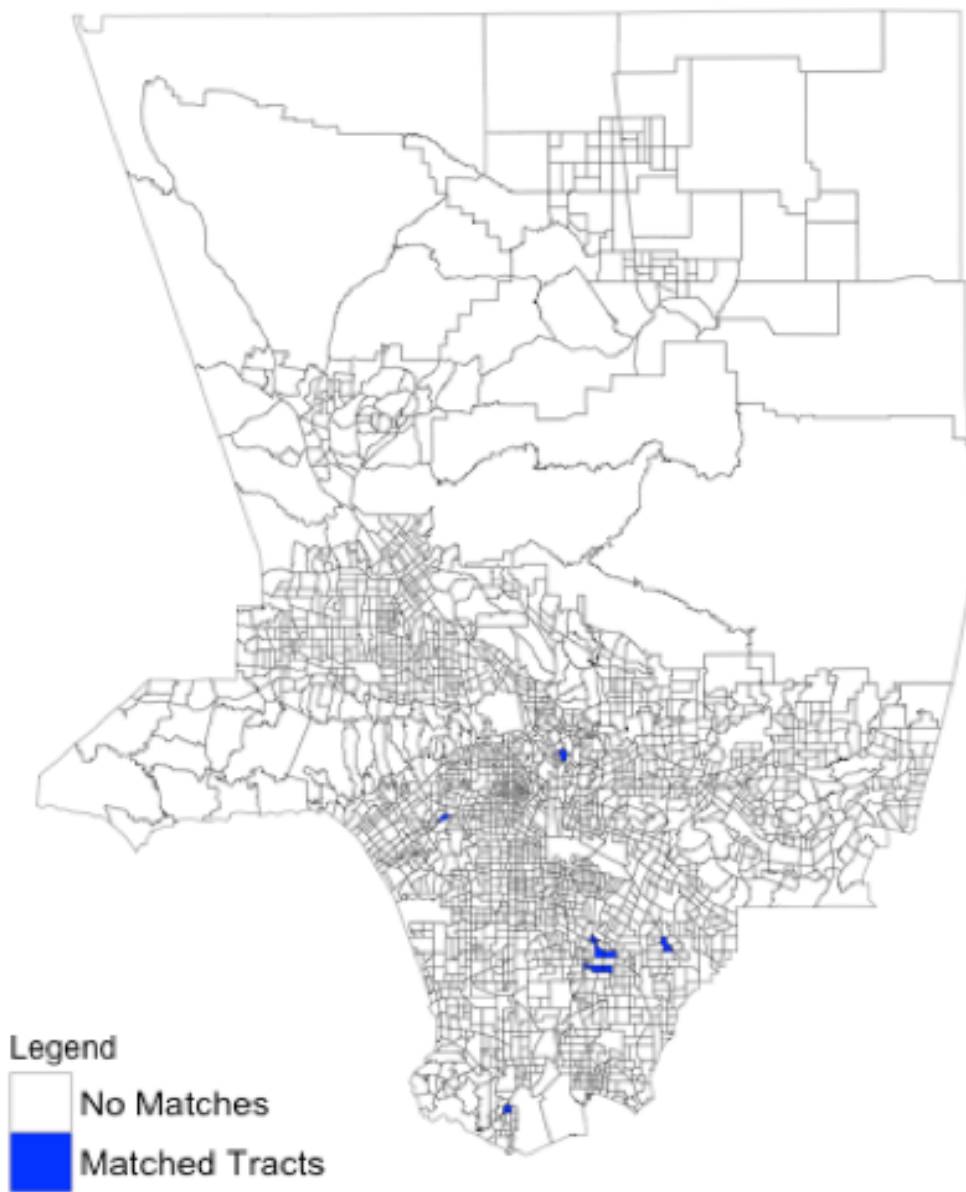


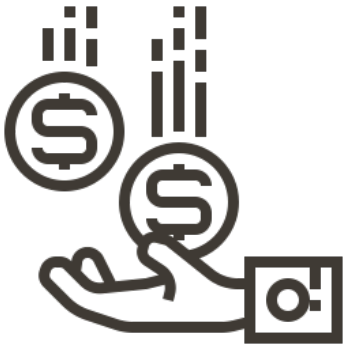
Table 3. Change in race/ethnicity for Fruitvale Village TOC and the Average Statewide Match, 2000 to 2015

	Fruitvale Village TOD (%)	Statewide Average (%)
Latinos		
2000	63.2	68.1
2015	62.3	74.1
Change	-0.9	+6.0
Blacks		
2000	12.3	9.4
2015	7.9	9.4
Change	-4.4	0.0
Whites		
2000	11.9	14.7
2015	11.5	10.7
Change	-0.4	-4.0
Asians/Pacific Islanders		
2000	9.7	5.2
2015	15.4	3.6
Change	+5.7	-1.6

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Statewide Outcomes

RACE/ETHNICITY



Shifts in household income and rent at the statewide level (tables 4,5) were similar to those found for the Bay Area matches. The Fruitvale Village TOD and the statewide match both experienced increases in household income and rent, but the Fruitvale Village TOD's change was greater for both variables. Compared to the Bay Area average, the increase in household income for the statewide match average was higher (32.6 percent and 39.2 percent, respectively). **Further, the Fruitvale Village TOD's gain in median household income**

RENT AND HOUSEHOLD INCOME



By 2015, Latinos had become the plurality in California and the Asian/Pacific Islander population had increased significantly. In the Fruitvale Village TOD, the percentage of Latinos decreased—but only slightly, about 1 percent—while the statewide match saw an increase of 6 percent. Both Fruitvale and the state saw a decrease in their white populations, with the statewide match experiencing a larger decrease. For the statewide match, the Asian population decreased slightly (1.6 percent), and the Black population remained unchanged.

Table 4. Change in median household income for Fruitvale Village TOD, the Average Statewide Match, and the average for all Bay Area Matches, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (\$)	2015 (\$)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD	34,363	50,573	+47.2
Statewide average	33,873	47,153	+39.2
Bay Area average	34,715	46,027	+32.6

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

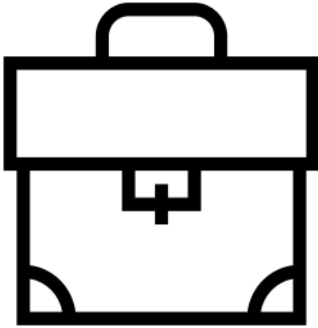
Table 5. Change in median gross monthly rent for Fruitvale Village TOD, the Average Statewide Match, and the average for all Bay Area Matches, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (%)	2015 (%)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD	690	1,261	+82.7
Statewide average	683	1,137	+66.5
Bay Area average	664	1,130	+70.6

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Statewide Outcomes

HOME OWNERSHIP AND UNEMPLOYMENT



In contrast to the decrease of 3.1 percent seen in home ownership for the Bay Area average, the decrease for the statewide match average was less than 1 percent (appendix B, table 2a). During the same period, home ownership for the Fruitvale Village TOD increased more than 8 percent, representing tremendous growth. Unemployment outcomes statewide were similar to those for the Bay Area matches (-0.2 percent), showing a small decrease at 0.3 percent, whereas Fruitvale Village TOD experienced a slight increase of just under 1 percent (appendix B, table 2b).

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



For educational attainment, the gains for the statewide match average were less substantial in comparison to those for the Bay Area match average and the Fruitvale Transit TOD (tables 6, 7). Fruitvale Village TOD's educational gains were not only positive and substantial for both percent without GED and percent with BA, but also well above the Bay Area average and the statewide match. **For both educational attainment variables, the Fruitvale Village TOD outperformed the Statewide match average almost twofold (tables 6, 7).**

Table 6. Change in percentage of residents without a GED for Fruitvale Village TOD, the Average Statewide Match, and the average for all Bay Area Matches, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (%)	2015 (%)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD	47.9	35.8	-12.0
Statewide average	44.3	35.2	-9.1
Bay Area average	44.0	37.8	-6.2

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Table 7. Change in percentage of residents with a BA for Fruitvale Village TOD, the Average Statewide Match, and the average for all Bay Area Matches, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (%)	2015 (%)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD	12.1	25.4	+13.3
Statewide average	11.8	14.4	+2.6
Bay Area average	11.3	19.1	+7.8

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

KEY STATEWIDE FINDINGS

When compared to the statewide match average, between 2000 and 2015 the Fruitvale Village TOD experienced larger positive increases across four variables: home ownership, median household income, residents without a high school diploma or GED (or similar diploma), and residents with a BA. The magnitude of these socioeconomic gains for the Fruitvale Village TOD were larger than those for the statewide match average and the Bay Area average. The median gross monthly rent increased substantially for all matches as well as the Fruitvale Village TOD, a reflection of the statewide housing crisis. The rent increase over the fifteen-year period for the Fruitvale neighborhood exceeded that for the statewide match average by \$117. The racial/ethnic similarity of the statewide matches and the Fruitvale Village TOD supports the significance of these findings for socioeconomically disadvantaged communities across California, especially Latino communities Southern California.

Controlling for Gentrification

To control for gentrification, we compared the Fruitvale Village TOD to the most rapidly gentrifying census tract in the Bay Area. To identify gentrification, we measured the growth in the percentage of white residents in Bay Area census tracts between 2000 and 2015. The most rapid growth occurred in census tract 4027, which encompasses Uptown Oakland (table 8). It is important to note that tract 4027 is in Alameda County and is located approximately four miles away from the Fruitvale Village TOD.

Table 8. Change in percentage of residents by race/ethnicity for Fruitvale Village TOC and Uptown Oakland, 2000 to 2015

	Fruitvale Village TOD (%)	Uptown Oakland (%)
Latinos		
2000	63.2	23.1
2015	62.3	16.4
Change	-1.0	-6.7
Blacks		
2000	12.3	59.9
2015	7.9	45.6
Change	-4.4	-14.3
Whites		
2000	11.9	3.7
2015	11.5	27.6
Change	-0.4	+23.9
Asians/Pacific Islanders		
2000	9.7	7.9
2015	15.4	8.2
Change	+5.7	+0.3

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Between 2000 and 2015, the Uptown Oakland neighborhood experienced a sharp decrease in the number of residents of color compared to the more muted changes experienced by the Fruitvale Village TOD. Further, the Fruitvale Village TOD experienced larger increases in both median household income and home ownership when compared to Uptown Oakland (tables 9, 10). Both tracts saw a decrease in the percentage of residents without a GED (or equivalent) and an increase in the number of residents with a BA (Appendix C, tables 3a, 3b). With respect to unemployment, the percentage of unemployed in Uptown Oakland dropped by 3.4 percent, compared to the Fruitvale Village TOD's increase of almost 1 percent between 2000 and 2015.



Table 9. Change in household income for Fruitvale Village TOD and Uptown Oakland, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (%)	2015 (%)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD	34,363	50,573	+47.2
Uptown Oakland	30,359	40,169	+32.3

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.



Table 10. Change in home ownership for Fruitvale Village TOD and Uptown Oakland, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (%)	2015 (%)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD	27.1	35.3	+8.2
Uptown Oakland	17.5	15.5	-2.0

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Conclusion

This study explores the impact that community-driven economic development—specifically, culturally responsive TOD—can have on the socioeconomic outcomes of residents, including Latinos. Our findings suggest that the Unity Council’s intervention led to overall increases in income, home ownership, and educational attainment. Gentrification was not the reason for these socioeconomic gains. This study shows that the Latino racial/ethnic composition of the area studied remained almost unchanged over the fifteen-year period that was evaluated. This study provides insight into how TOD, coupled with positive community involvement, can improve the economic and social well-being of residents without resulting in displacement.

Moving forward, city and local governments should consider the Fruitvale Village TOD as a case study that can inform efforts for positive community transformation. The analysis presented here stresses the important role that TOD can have in Latino communities at a time when cities and states are planning large-scale transportation projects and grappling with the housing affordability crisis. Although the years 2000 through 2015 included the Great Recession, a time of tumultuous economic uncertainty, this study suggests that the TOD had a positive impact that enhanced residents’ socioeconomic standing.

Citations

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Endnotes

1 Community economic development is a process whereby collective action is applied to a community in order to improve all aspects of that community, including economic, social, environmental, and cultural factors (Shaffer, Deller, and Marcouiller 2002; Biddle 1966). Transit-oriented development is a catch-all term that encompasses developments near, oriented to, or on mass transit facilities (Cervero 2004). Other terms that are used to describe this type of intervention are transit village, transit-supportive development, and transit-friendly design. Most TODs share elements such as mixed-use development, compactness, pedestrian- and cycle-friendly infrastructure, and the use of transit stations as community hubs.

2 The term Latino is derived from Latin American. Although the US Census Bureau uses non-white Hispanics in its data collection and reporting, we use Latino because it best reflects the diverse national origins and the nearly unitary treatment of this racial/ethnic group in the United States (Hayes-Bautista and Chapa 1987).

3 See the Unity Council's website: <https://unitycouncil.org/who-we-are/about-us>.

Appendix A

Table 1a. Change in median gross monthly rent for Fruitvale Village TOD and Bay Area Matches, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (\$)	2015 (\$)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD (%)	690	1,261	+82.8
Average Alameda County Matches (%)	653	1,132	+73.3
Average for Contra Costa County Matches (%)	677	1,087	+60.7
Average for Santa Clara County Matches (%)	661	1,231	+83.5
Bay Area Average (%)	664	1,130	+70.6

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Table 1b. Change in median household income for Fruitvale Village TOD and Bay Area Matches, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (\$)	2015 (\$)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD (%)	34,363	50,573	+47.2
Average Alameda County Matches (%)	33,551	41,215	+22.8
Average for Contra Costa County Matches (%)	36,841	48,021	+30.4
Average for Santa Clara County Matches (%)	32,307	51,662	+59.9
Bay Area Average (%)	34,715	46,027	+32.6

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Table 1c. Change in unemployment for Fruitvale Village TOC and Bay Area Matches, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (%)	2015 (%)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD (%)	9.2	10.1	+0.9
Average Alameda County Matches (%)	13.4	13.5	-0.1
Average for Contra Costa County Matches (%)	12.7	10.3	-2.4
Average for Santa Clara County Matches (%)	6.9	11.9	+5.0
Bay Area Average (%)	12.1	11.9	-0.2

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Table 1d. Change in percentage of residents without a GED for Fruitvale Village TOC and Bay Area Matches, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (%)	2015 (%)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD (%)	47.9	35.8	-12.1
Average Alameda County Matches (%)	46.8	41.5	-5.3
Average for Contra Costa County Matches (%)	44.4	41.7	-2.7
Average for Santa Clara County Matches (%)	36.0	22.6	-13.4
Bay Area Average (%)	44.0	37.8	-6.2

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Table 1e. Change in percentage of residents with a BA for Fruitvale Village TOD and Bay Area Matches, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (%)	2015 (%)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD (%)	12.1	25.4	+13.3
Average Alameda County Matches (%)	11.1	16.6	+5.5
Average for Contra Costa County Matches (%)	6.7	9.9	+3.2
Average for Santa Clara County Matches (%)	23.1	42.5	+19.4
Bay Area Average (%)	11.3	19.1	+7.8

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Appendix B

Table 2a. Change in home ownership for Fruitvale Village TOD and the Average Statewide Match, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (%)	2015 (%)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD	27.1	35.3	+8.2
Statewide average	36.4	35.6	-0.8
Bay Area average	36.5	33.4	-3.1

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Table 2b. Change in unemployment for Fruitvale Village TOD and the Average Statewide Match, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (%)	2015 (%)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD	9.2	10.1	+0.9
Statewide average	10.7	10.4	-0.3
Bay Area average	12.1	11.9	-0.2

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Appendix C

Table 3a. Change in percentage of residents without a GED for Fruitvale Village TOC and Uptown Oakland, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (%)	2015 (%)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD	47.9	35.8	-12.1
Uptown Oakland	41.3	28.1	-13.2

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Table 3b. Change in percentage of residents with a BA for Fruitvale Village TOC and Uptown Oakland, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (%)	2015 (%)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD	12.1	25.4	+13.3
Uptown Oakland	11.2	29.0	+17.8

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

Table 3c. Change in unemployment for Fruitvale Village TOC and Uptown Oakland, 2000 to 2015

	2000 (%)	2015 (%)	Change (%)
Fruitvale Village TOD	9.2	10.1	+0.9
Uptown Oakland	11.7	8.3	-3.4

Source: 2000 US Decennial Census and 2015 American Community Survey.

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