



# Transit Oriented Communities - Ambler Station

Project Update

**Ambler Borough Planning Commission**

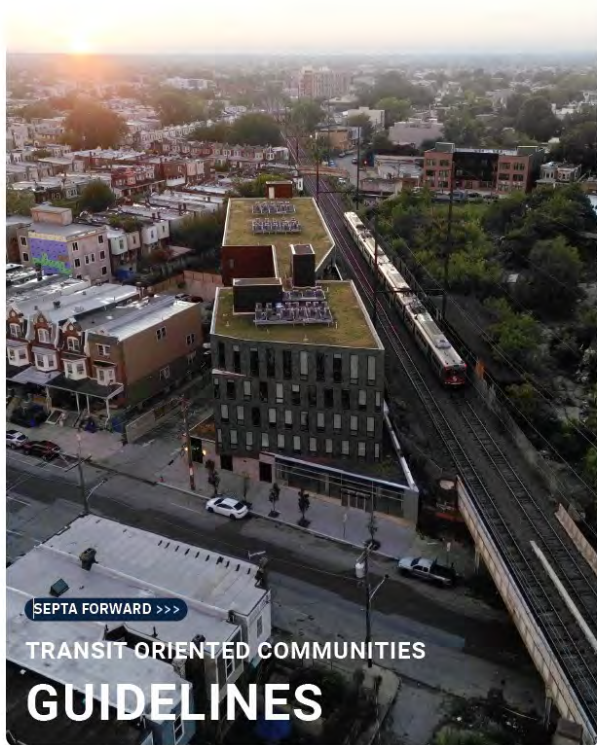
July 28, 2026

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# Transit Oriented Communities – Ambler Station Project Update

## AGENDA

- TOC Program Background
- Ambler Station Area Concept Development
- Land Entitlements
- Request for Proposals for Joint Development
- Joint Development Partner Selection
- Next Steps



## SEPTA's Transit Oriented Communities Program supports partnerships that encourage growth around SEPTA's stations and services.

The TOC Guidelines were published in Fall 2024.

- The Guidelines respond to existing interest for SEPTA to participate in TOC planning, policy, and zoning work, to review proposed developments that may or may not be transit supportive, and to react to unsolicited interest in our properties.
- As a major driver of the regional economy, SEPTA recognizes that our inventory of real estate assets and adjacent properties have value that can be leveraged.
- The TOC Guidelines provide:
  - ✓ Clear goals and strategies
  - ✓ Illustrative station area and corridor typologies
  - ✓ Strong implementation framework

# Transit Oriented Communities define and shape the Southeastern Pennsylvania region.

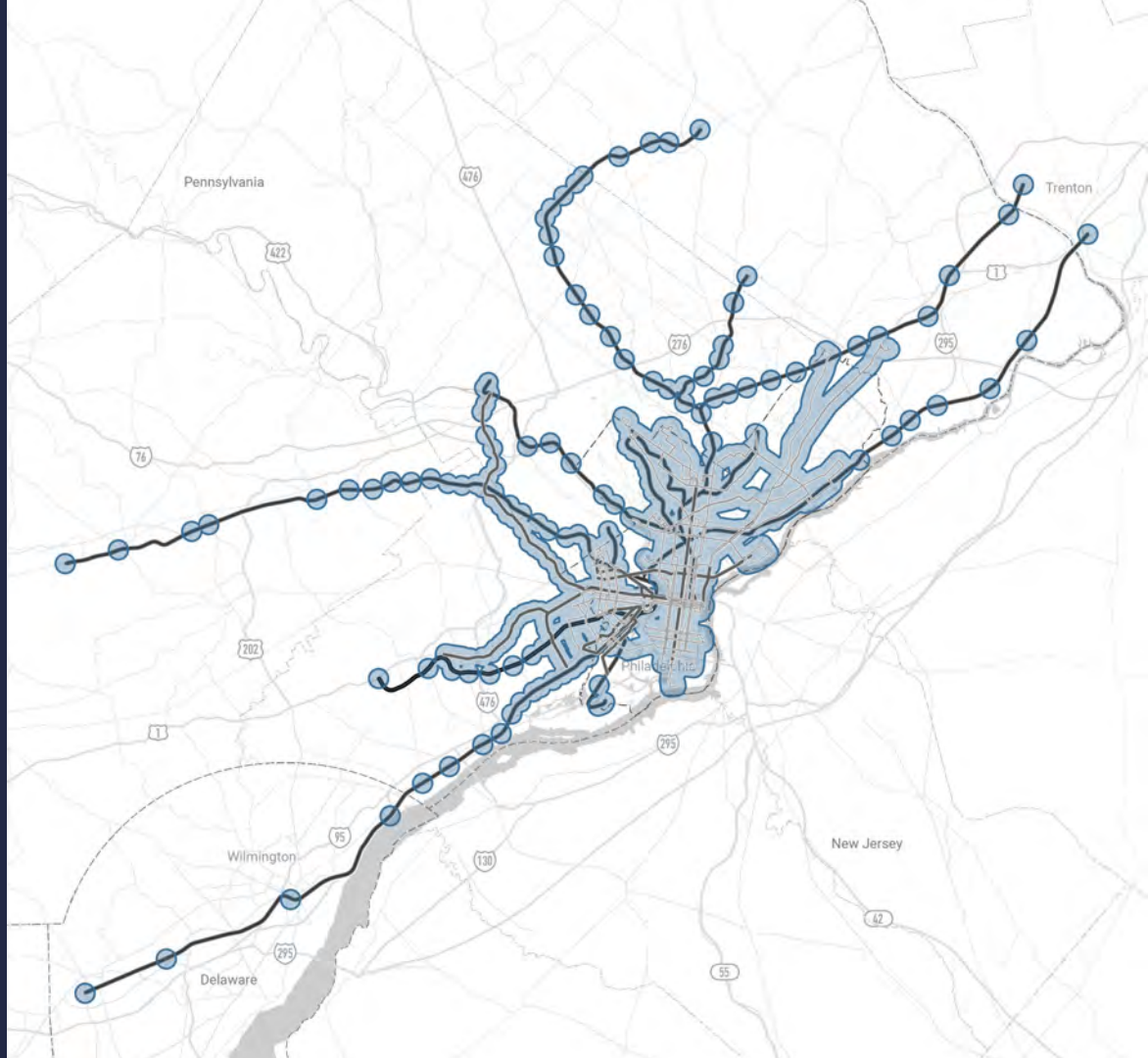
Philadelphia area communities grew around transit.

- As a legacy agency, SEPTA **has inherited both transit assets and the settlement patterns** that grew around 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century train, trolley, and bus services.
- SEPTA recognizes that there are differences across communities and new development should be **compatible with existing neighborhood fabric.**
- **Development intensity changes** based upon the frequency of transit services, community walkability, and quality of multimodal connections.
- SEPTA's TOC program works with partners to further transit-supportive land use, urban design, and development that **reinforces the major investments** being made to the SEPTA system.



## SEPTA's TOC program reflects and supports our rich legacy of communities built around transit.

- TOCs reinforce existing community character and walkability around rail stations and along high-frequency transit corridors.
- 45% of the five-county population lives within a half mile of rail and frequent SEPTA transit. That's **1.9 Million people living on only 10% of the land**. (Source: US Census)
- **80% of people** who use SEPTA services today walk or roll to their stop or station.
- SEPTA has approximately **20,000 commuter parking spaces** across all modes with approximately 732,800 weekday daily passenger trips.



# SEPTA is committed to transparent, equitable, and community-driven implementation of its Transit Oriented Communities program.

The Guidelines provide an implementation umbrella that goes beyond redevelopment of agency-controlled land and enables SEPTA to be a strong stakeholder and advocate for TOC plans, policies, and development in the region.

|               | <br><b>PARTNER &amp; SPONSOR</b><br>TOC projects on agency-owned land                               | <br><b>COORDINATE &amp; FACILITATE</b><br>TOC projects on non-SEPTA owned land          | <br><b>PLAN &amp; ADVOCATE</b><br>for TOC at the regional & local levels                                                                                      |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SEPTA ROLE    | Development Partner; Landowner                                                                                                                                                       | Stakeholder                                                                                                                                                              | Advocate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| FOCUS AREA    | SEPTA-Owned Land                                                                                                                                                                     | SEPTA TOC Areas - Stations & Corridors                                                                                                                                   | Southeastern PA                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| SEPTA ACTIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Create Station Area Concepts and similar plans for SEPTA properties.</li><li>■ Evaluate and award joint development opportunities.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Offer development review services.</li><li>■ Monitor development proposals.</li><li>■ Coordinate capital improvements.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Advocate for Federal and State legislation and funding that advance TOC.</li><li>■ Participate or lead TOC station area and corridor planning studies.</li><li>■ Provide technical assistance.</li></ul> |



## PARTNER & SPONSOR

TOC projects on agency-owned land

**SEPTA initiates joint development projects after a thoughtful screening and planning process.**

**Station Area Concepts are focused on SEPTA property.**

Stations that are prioritized for study have:

- ✓ Higher development potential
- ✓ Larger parcels
- ✓ Supportive plans and zoning
- ✓ Strong municipal partners
- ✓ Previous interest

***Ambler checks all these boxes.***

Station Area Concepts:

- Create a case for TOC development.
- Employ community involvement.
- Enable SEPTA to **solicit proposals** through a competitive selection process.



## PARTNER & SPONSOR

TOC projects on agency-owned land



*Alterra's Conshohocken Station Joint Development Rendering*

# SEPTA has several projects in its joint development pipeline.

SEPTA has worked quickly on implementation of its TOC Guidelines and Program.

### Developer Selection & Award:

- Conshohocken Station
- Ambler Station

### Land Entitlements:

- Germantown Station/Cheltenham Avenue
- Langhorne Station

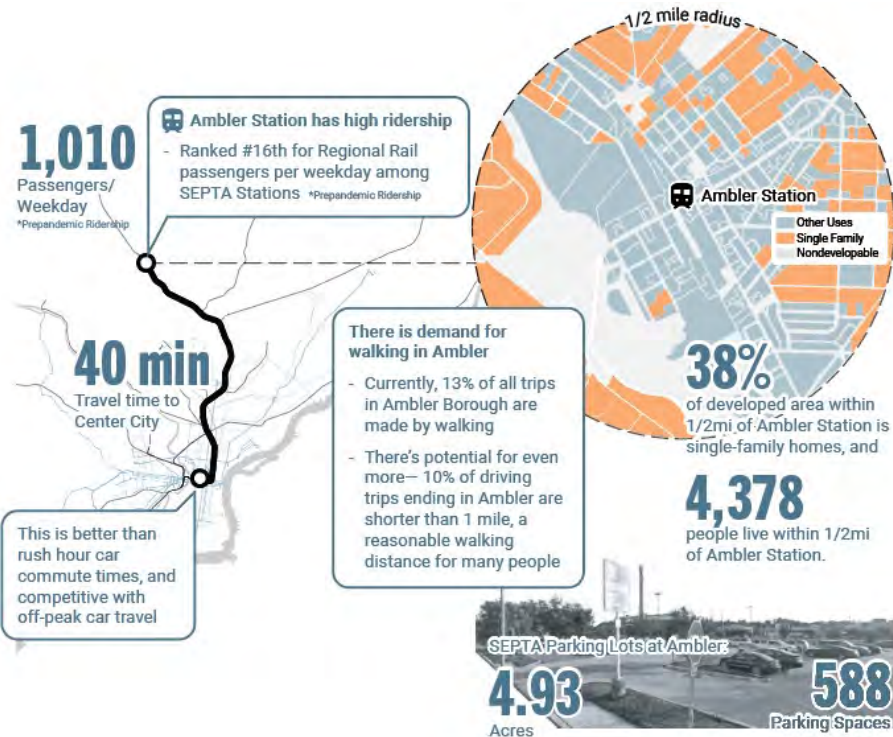
### Concept Development:

- Mifflin Substation
- Swarthmore Station



# Ambler Station entered the Inquiry & Screening TOC pipeline phase in early 2023.

The study of Ambler Station was simultaneous to the development of the TOC Guidelines.



**FINDINGS: Ambler has a strong existing TOC orientation and housing market. The Ambler Station area is well positioned for additional development that is multi-modal, multi-family and mixed-used.**

The site is well situated near commercial activity

- Butler Pike is a thriving regional shopping, dining, and cultural destination

Retail spaces are at

**100%** occupancy, which means there is no space for new businesses to open or existing business to expand

There is demand for more multi-family units

- There is recent multi-family growth
- Ambler has a young population

**12%**

of Ambler households spend half or more of their income on housing, and within 1/2mi of Ambler Station, rental units are in high demand:

**Rents have doubled in the last 10 years**

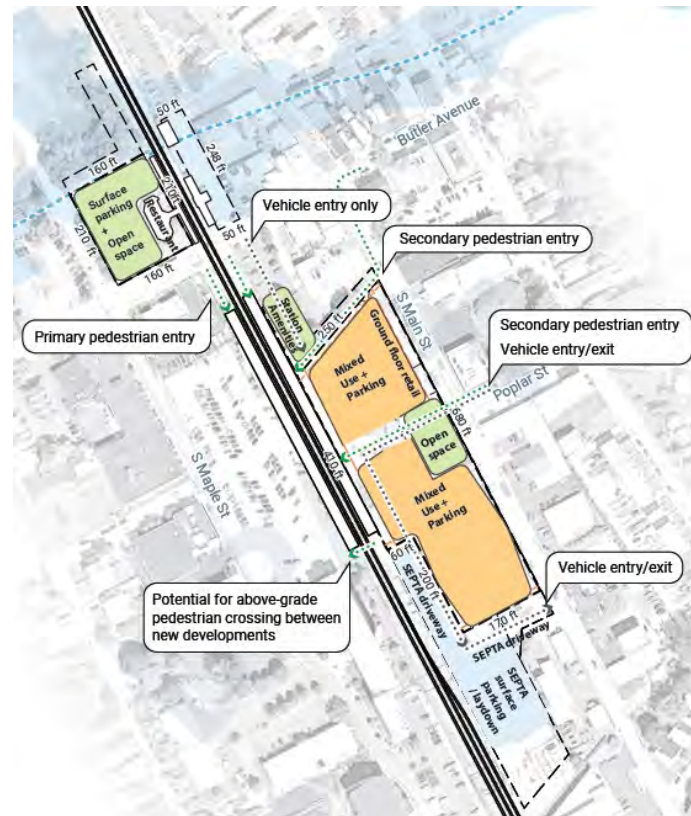
**25.5%** of the population in Ambler is 18-34 years old



# The Ambler Station site concept was closely developed with the Borough and County.

Ambler Station existing conditions analysis enabled the development envelope to be defined.

- The development envelope is the portion of the SEPTA site that is suitable for redevelopment. SEPTA maintenance and operations needs must be retained.
- Ambler's zoning code encourages transit-oriented development.
- Previous planning efforts provided clear guidance on the Borough's vision for the station area site:
  - *Transit Revitalization Investment District Study*;
  - *Strategic Plan*;
  - *Open Space Plan*;
  - *Flooding and Stormwater Management Plan*;
  - *Finding Spaces: A Parking Action Plan*;
  - *Comprehensive Plan*





# The public open house was successful and enabled the Ambler Station Area Concept to advance.

Approximately 200 members of the public attended the open house at the Borough.

- The Borough set expectations for SEPTA's community engagement, and the open house was held in January 2024.
- Borough and County staff provided advertising, meeting format and content oversight, and meeting support.
- The meeting was well attended, and attendees showed cautious and caring concern.
- The community was open to mixed-use redevelopment if community needs are addressed:
  - Stormwater management & public open space
  - Affordability
  - Community character
  - Parking & traffic management





# Ambler Borough with the Montgomery County Planning Commission advanced zoning changes to enable TOC.

Community input and past experiences shaped legislation.

- With community feedback, zoning code updates that enabled mixed-use redevelopment of the SEPTA property through expansion of the Redevelopment Overlay (RO) district began in Spring 2024.
- The Redevelopment Overlay (RO) zoning code updates also included new urban design language to encourage appropriate development.
- A Finding of Special Opportunity (FOSO) which enables SEPTA to award real estate-related projects was approved by the SEPTA Board in June SEPTA 2024.
- The code updates became law in September 2024.

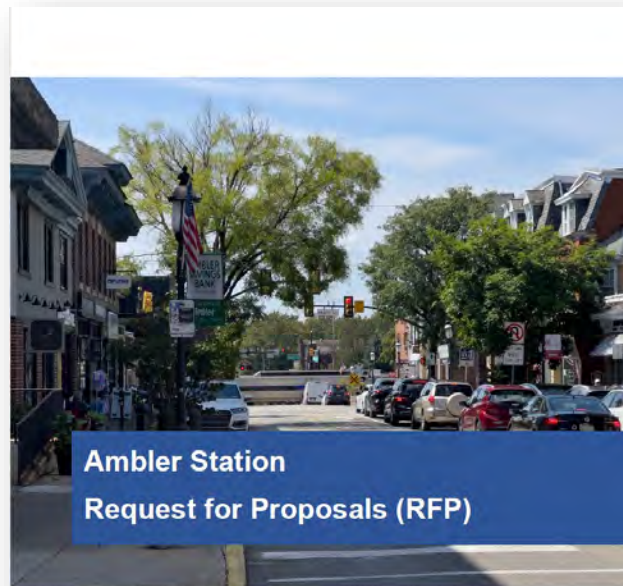




# Developer solicitation was conducted through a transparent and competitive Request for Proposals process.

The RFP was based upon the goals and values developed through the concept development.

- The RFP was released in June 2025.
- The RFP clearly defined the site and development concept:
  - Ground floor commercial along Main Street.
  - Upper floor apartments.
  - Ambler Station access.
  - Commuter, shared, and development-supportive parking.
  - Public amenities such as usable open space, improved streetscape, and stormwater management.
- The RFP also emphasized additional scope considerations including stormwater management, affordable housing, design and energy standards, and access and circulation.
- SEPTA received seven proposals from highly qualified national and regional developers.
- Proposals were scored by SEPTA on four criteria: Project Approach, Project Team Experience and Organization; Pricing Offer and Financial Capacity; and Location/Past Experience.



SEPTA's Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) Program  
Exhibit I



# Korman and Benchmark were selected as the Ambler Station joint development partners in February 2026.

The proposal closely aligned with the vision for the site while demonstrating a strong track record.

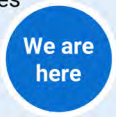
- Korman Communities, Inc. and Benchmark Real Estate, LLC proposed a mixed-use development.
  - Targeting 230 residential units with 19,000 sq ft of ground floor commercial.
  - 10% of units will be affordable at 80% of AMI.
  - Stormwater management and new public open space.
  - Shared parking for commuters, residents and businesses.
  - Reserved space for SEPTA maintenance and operations.
  - Architecture that reflects Ambler's community character.
- As proposed, if bonuses are approved, the zoning *should be* allowed by-right.
- SEPTA, Korman, and Benchmark are currently working towards agreements.



Ambler Station Joint Development Rendering

# SEPTA's TOC joint development process offers multiple stakeholder and public participation opportunities.

Next steps will see the project refinement phase being led by Korman & Benchmark.

| STAGE   | Station Concept Development                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Developer Solicitation and Selection                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Project Refinement                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Permitting and Construction                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ACTIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SEPTA drafts a Station Area Concept based upon existing conditions, previous planning efforts, and internal and external stakeholder coordination.</li><li>• SEPTA gathers community feedback to finalize the Ambler Station Area Concept.</li><li>• Ambler Borough and Montgomery County work on zoning code updates that reflect the community's and SEPTA's vision for the station.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The SEPTA Board authorizes finding a development partner through a competitive process.</li><li>• The Ambler Station Area Concept is used as the basis for development partner evaluation.</li><li>• SEPTA updates the community on developer partner selection.</li><li>• SEPTA negotiates agreements with joint development partner.</li></ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Benchmark &amp; Korman advance site and architectural design.</li><li>• Zoning and other land development permissions are sought and project refinements are undertaken.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Borough and County reviews zoning and building permits for approval.</li><li>• Construction drawings are finalized.</li><li>• Construction begins.</li><li>• The project is occupied and completed.</li></ul> |



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