

A map of the United States with a green overlay and a network of lines. Numerous green circles are scattered across the map, representing 15-minute communities. The text is overlaid on the top left of the map.

ULI 15-Minute Leadership Strategy to Build More 15-Minute Communities

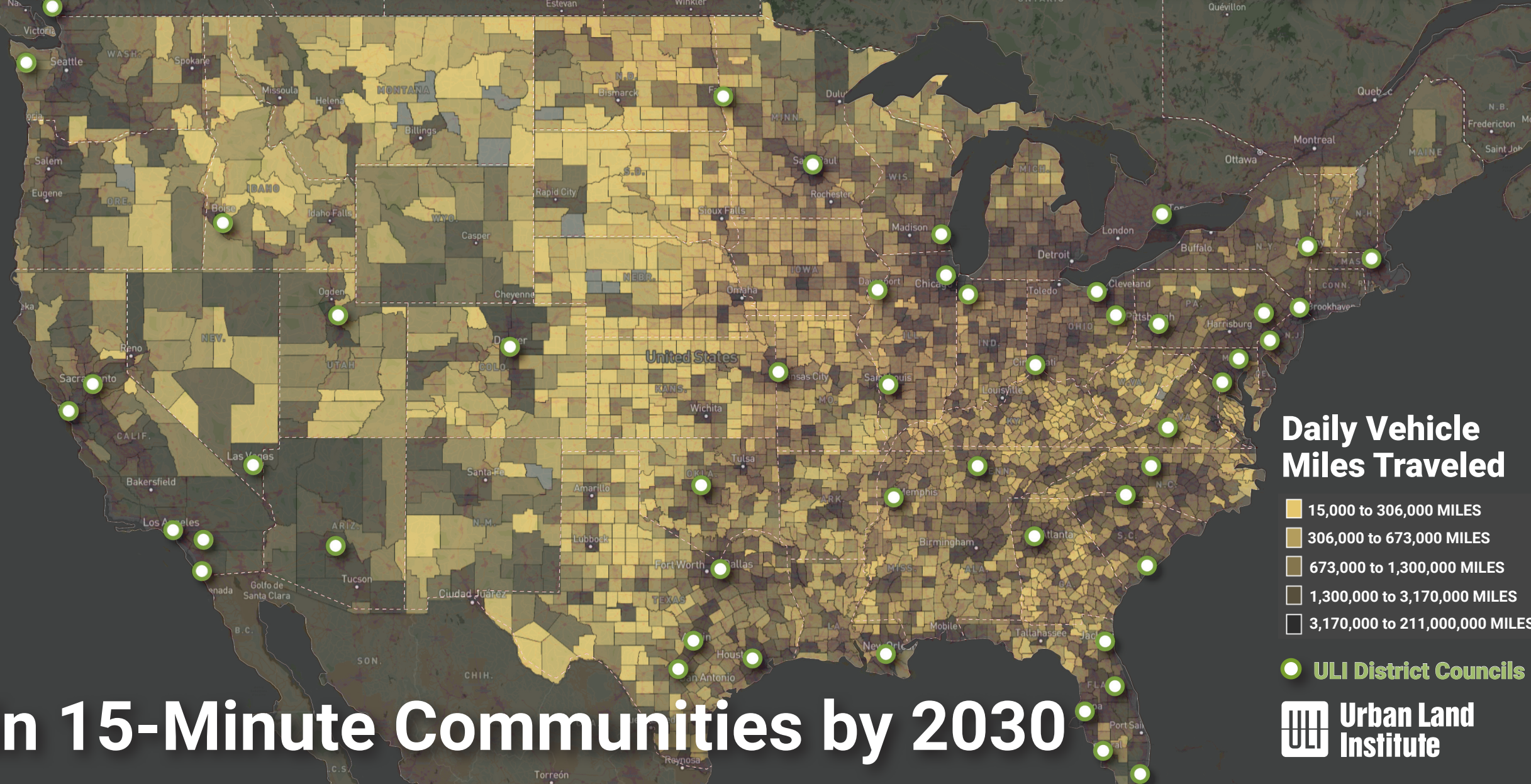
ULI Mission Priorities

Prepared by Yvonne Yeung, ULI Curtis Infrastructure Fellow



Urban Land
Institute

A Mission to Build 10+ billion SF of Development



in 15-Minute Communities by 2030

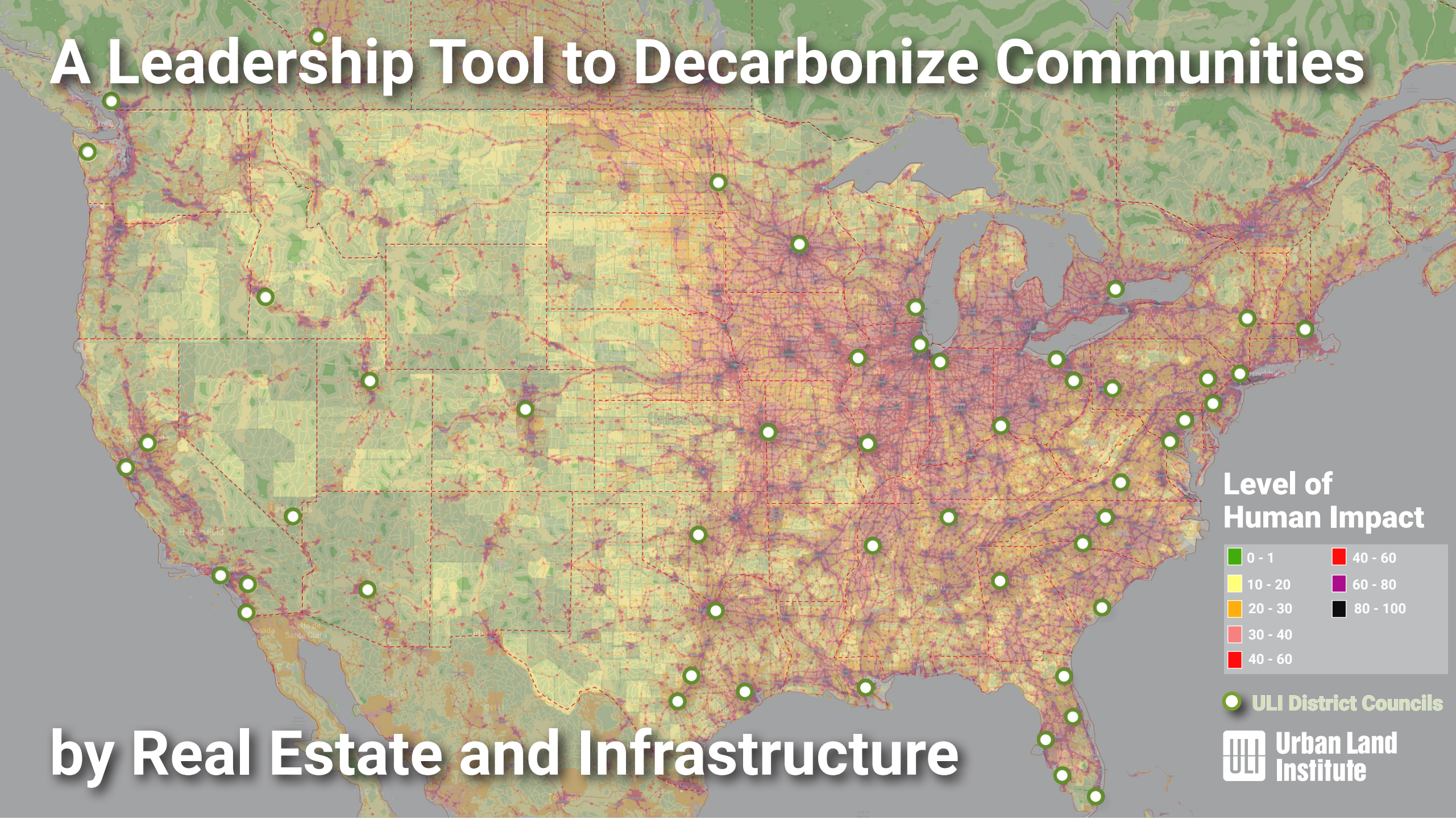
Daily Vehicle Miles Traveled

- 15,000 to 306,000 MILES
- 306,000 to 673,000 MILES
- 673,000 to 1,300,000 MILES
- 1,300,000 to 3,170,000 MILES
- 3,170,000 to 211,000,000 MILES

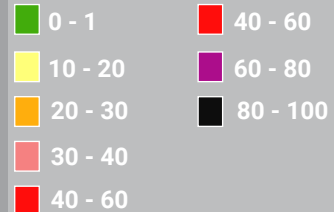
● ULI District Councils



A Leadership Tool to Decarbonize Communities



Level of Human Impact



ULI District Councils

by Real Estate and Infrastructure

Urban Land Institute

Shape by Five Forces for Change

Align Actions
with Innovative
Initiatives

Streamline
Infrastructure
Delivery

Make
Infrastructure
Multifunctional

Apply Walkable
Catchment
Decisions

Bringing
Infrastructure to
Life with "One"

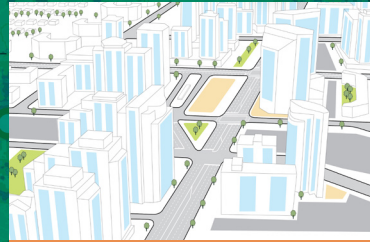
Transform by Six Leadership Strategies



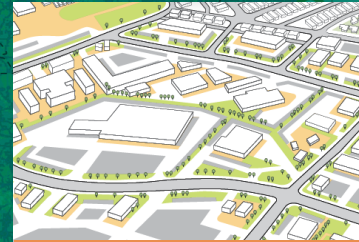
Decarbonize
Metro regions
with TOCs



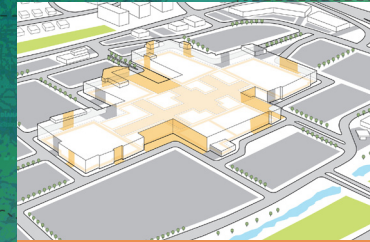
Diversify CBDs
into Live-in
Downtowns



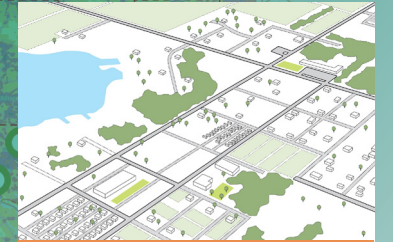
Humanize &
Heat-proof
Edge Cities



Innovate
Suburban
Densification



Transform
Malls into
Communities



Activate
Exurbs as
Working NBS

Integrate by Five Infrastructure Systems

One
Vision

One
Environmental

One
Community

One
Energy

One
Mobility

Align Leadership Actions with Initiatives

Infrastructure Initiatives (2021-2023)

30x30 Conservation

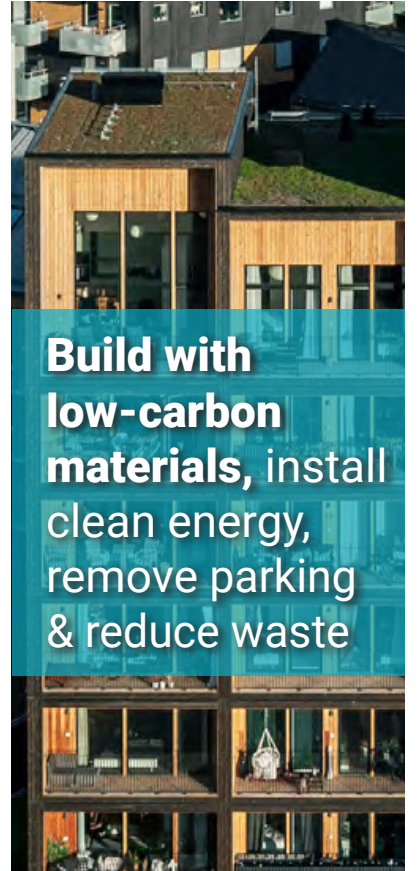
Justice40 Initiative

Healthy People 2030

50% decarbonization by 2030



Use 40% of funds to fill transit and service gaps, and extend site improvements in underserved communities



Combine Actions to Streamline Delivery

Infrastructure Initiatives (2021-2023)

Funding Structure and Eligibility (IIJA)

30x30 Conservation

Justice40 Initiative

Healthy People 2030

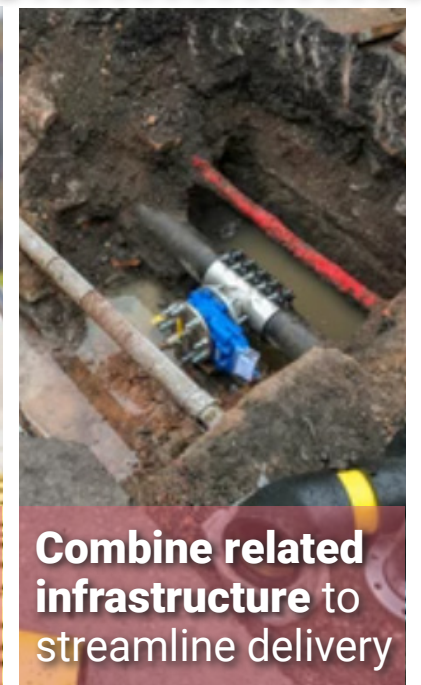
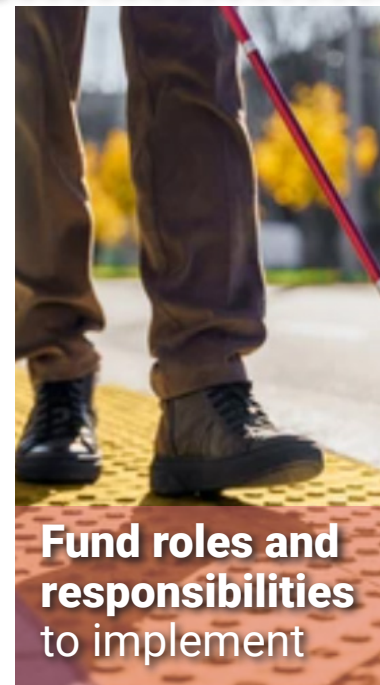
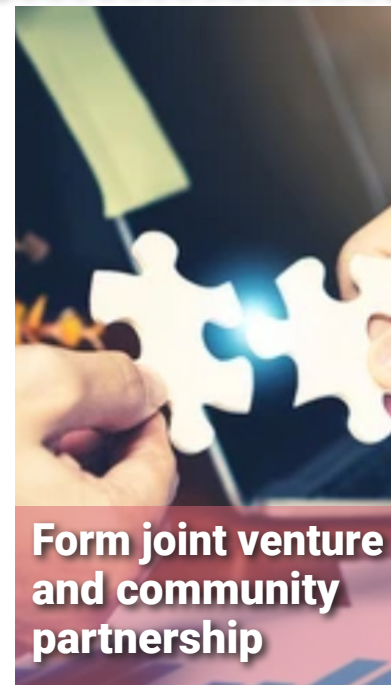
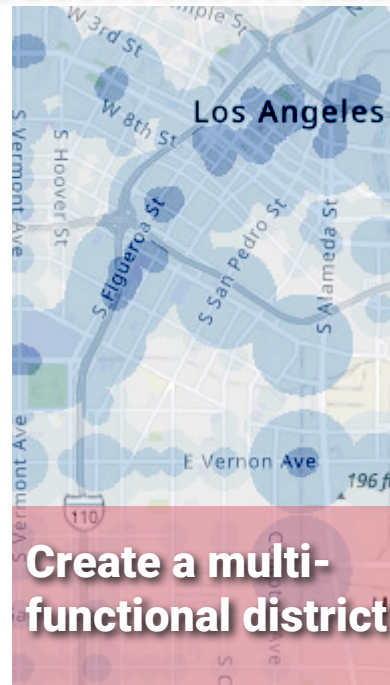
50% decarbonization by 2030

Metro region, special district, tribal, rural

Public, private, nonprofit

Plan, Engage, R&D, Capital, Operation

Infrastructure in categories



Make Infrastructure Multifunctional

Infrastructure Initiatives (2021-2023)

Funding Structure and Eligibility (IIJA)

Committee Oversight (IRA, ARPA)

30x30 Conservation

Justice40 Initiative

Healthy People 2030

50% decarbonization by 2030

Metro region, special district, tribal, rural

Public, private, nonprofit

Plan, Engage, R&D, Capital, Operation

Infrastructure in categories

Child and senior care, health and education

Transit, complete streets, regional greenway, active transportation, clean mobility

Energy, building efficiency, drought mitigation, and water supply



Collocate multiple services in hubs



Integrate multimodal network in green streets

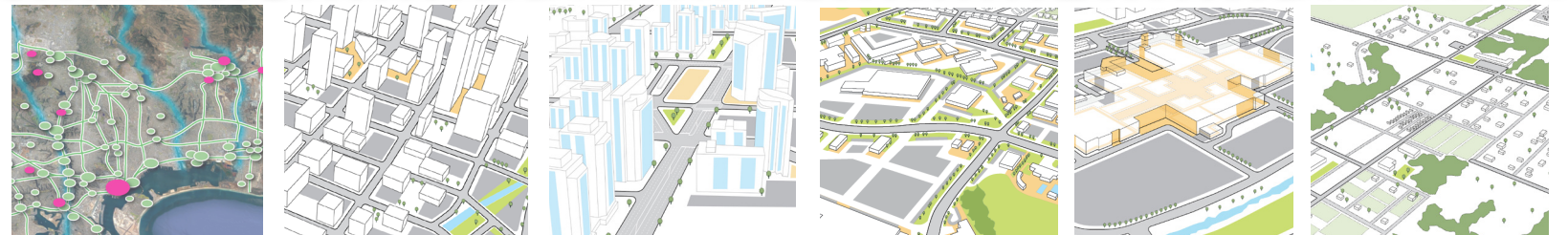


Create urban sponge and decarbonize a district

Build 15-Minute Communities

Infrastructure Initiatives (2021-2023)
Funding Structure and Eligibility (IIJA)
Committee Oversight (IRA, ARPA)
Geography Type (walkable catchment)

30x30 Conservation	Justice40 Initiative	Healthy People 2030	50% decarbonization by 2030		
Metro region, special district, tribal, rural	Public, private, nonprofit	Plan, Engage, R&D, Capital, Operation	Infrastructure in categories		
Child and senior care, health and education	Transit, complete streets, regional greenway, active transportation, clean mobility	Energy, building efficiency, drought mitigation, and water supply			
425 Metro Regions	Over 185 Downtowns	Over 200 Edge cities	Over 110,000 Suburban Corridors	Over 1,000 Malls	Exurbs 1/3 of the global agricultural land



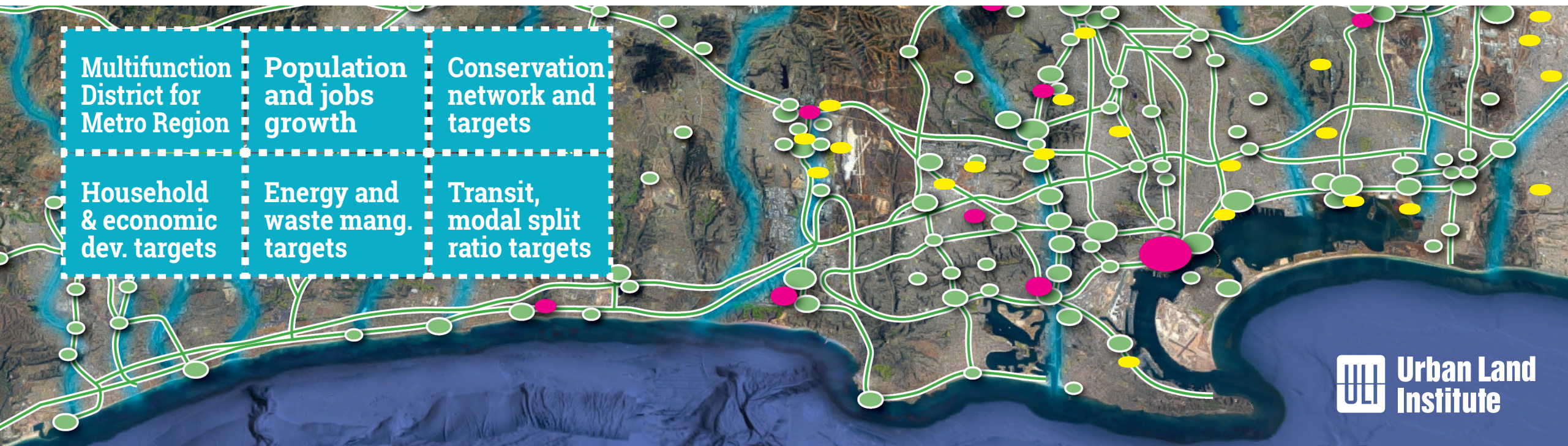
Bring Infrastructure to Life

Infrastructure Initiatives (2021-2023)	30x30 Conservation		Justice40 Initiative		Healthy People 2030		50% decarbonization by 2030			
Funding Structure and Eligibility (IIJA)	Metro region, special district, tribal, rural		Public, private, nonprofit		Plan, Engage, R&D, Capital, Operation		Infrastructure in categories			
Committee Oversight (IRA, ARPA)	Child and senior care, health and education		Transit, complete streets, regional greenway, active transportation, clean mobility		Energy, building efficiency, drought mitigation, and water supply					
Geography Type (walkable catchment)	425 Metro Regions	Over 185 Downtowns	Over 200 Edge cities	Over 110,000 Suburban Corridors	Over 1,000 Malls	Exurbs 1/3 of the global agricultural land				
Infrastructure Systems (human lens)	One Vision infrastructure		One environmental infrastructure		One community infrastructure		One energy infrastructure		One mobility infrastructure	

Metro Regions Decarbonize with a network of 15-minute communities

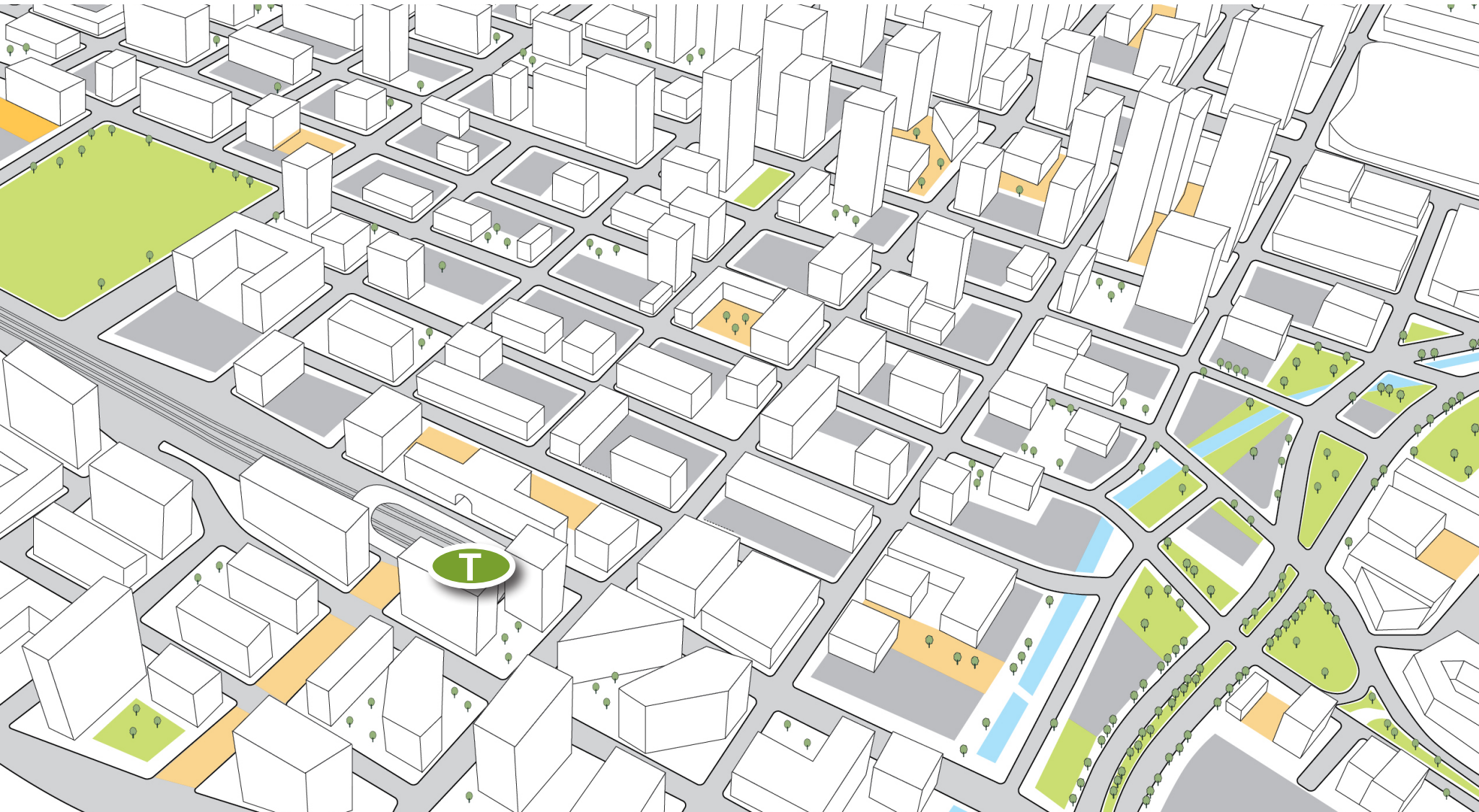
- Ensure reliable infrastructure
- Decarbonize the electricity system
- Repurpose transportation rights-of-way
- Use the circular economy to decarbonize supply chain
- Ensure Coordination of Integrated Planning

“Many components of municipal infrastructure, from roads to sewer to transit, have been built for tolerances and weather conditions that do not align with the new climate reality. In the short term, some of the work to mitigate climate risk could re-create more economic activities.” –Larry Fink, chairman and CEO of BlackRock, letter to CEOs



15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Downtowns Create Diversified, Decarbonized, Affordable, Live-in CBDs



Stage 1 Create a special district

Government

Establish a district commission

Real estate

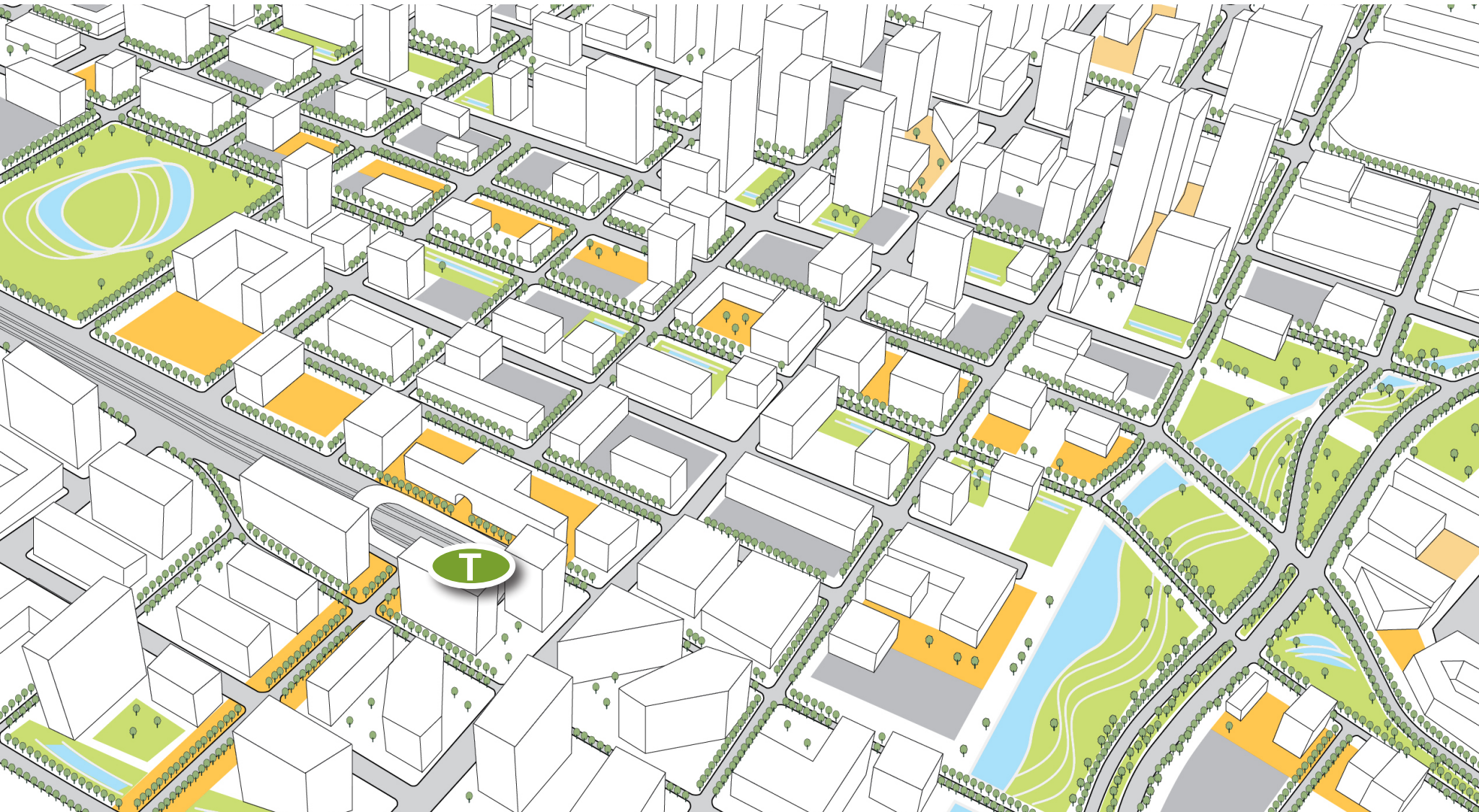
Create a community decarbonization vision

Nonprofit

Establish a local advisory group

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Downtowns Create Diversified, Decarbonized, Affordable, Live-in CBDs



Stage 2
Convert gray infrastructure to green infrastructure

Government

Connect green spaces and implement road diets

Real estate

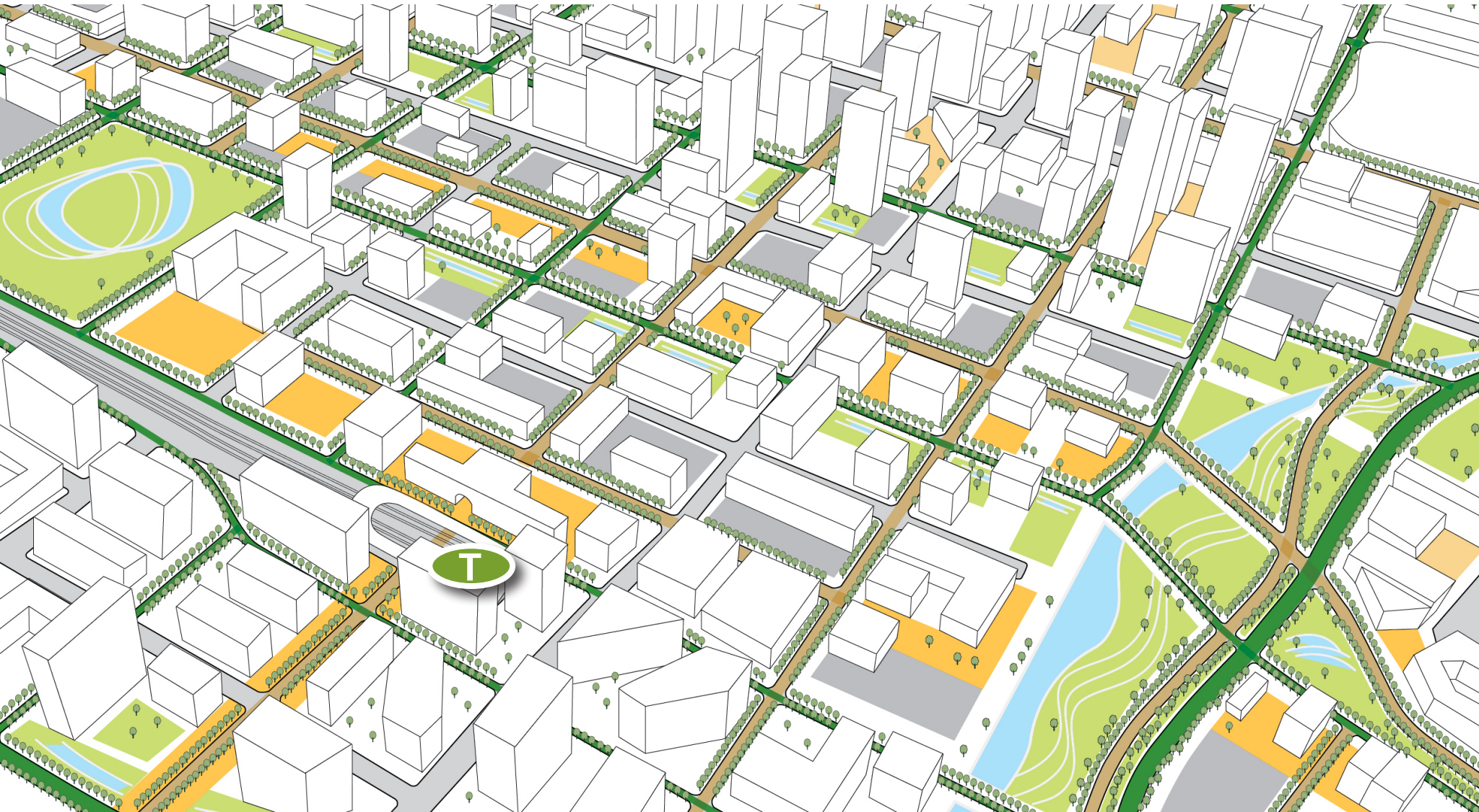
Convert spaces to accommodate pop-ups and socializing

Nonprofit

Host cultural programs

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Downtowns Create Diversified, Decarbonized, Affordable, Live-in CBDs



Stage 3 Improve walking and cycling

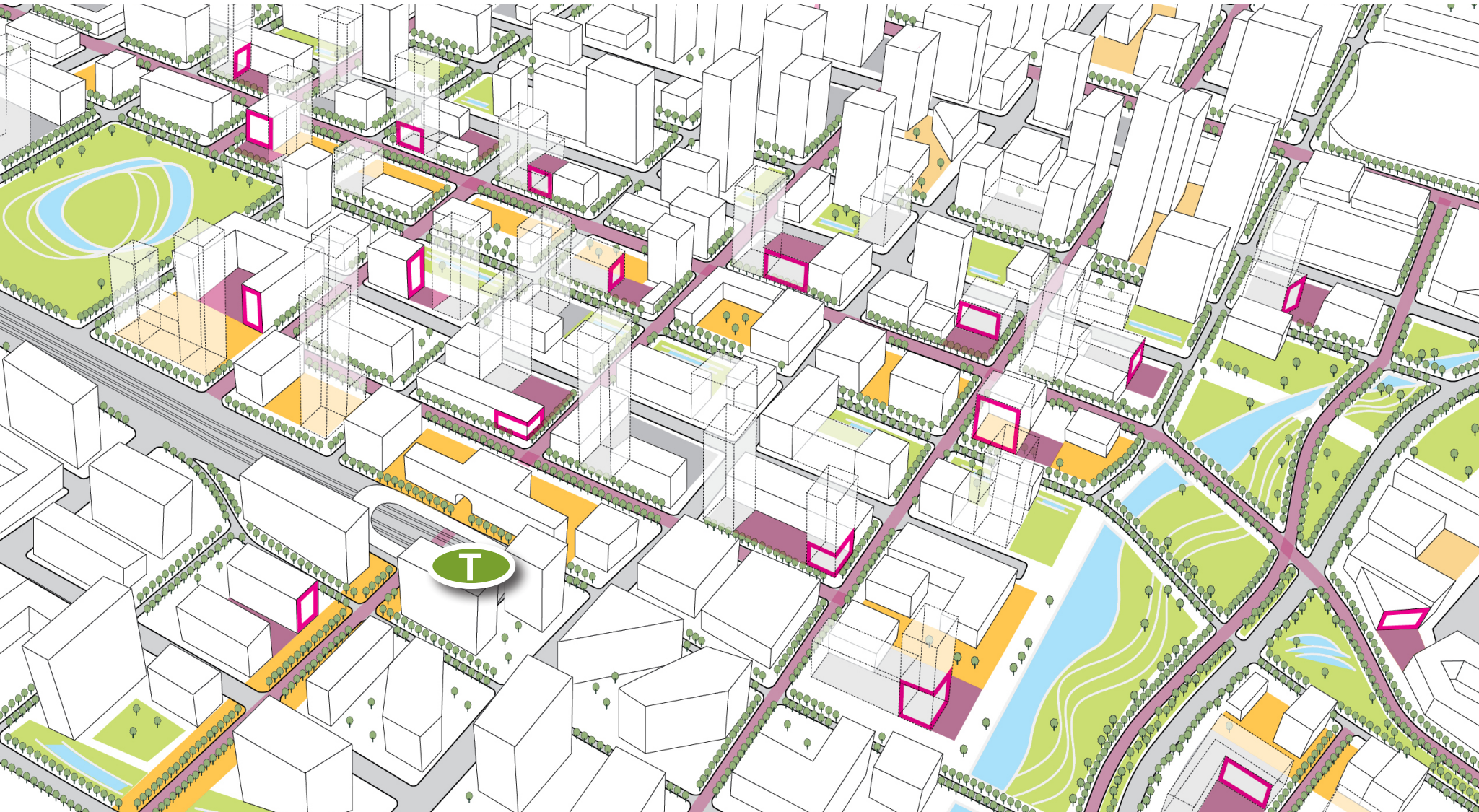
Government
Reduce parking; expand bikeways and increase transit

Real estate
Convert vacant spaces into housing; add micro-mobility options

Nonprofit
Develop a districtwide "one-trip" crowdsource app

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Downtowns Create Diversified, Decarbonized, Affordable, Live-in CBDs



Stage 4

Create a network of community hubs with a variety of services

Government

Identify hub locations, and co-locate public services in hubs

Real estate

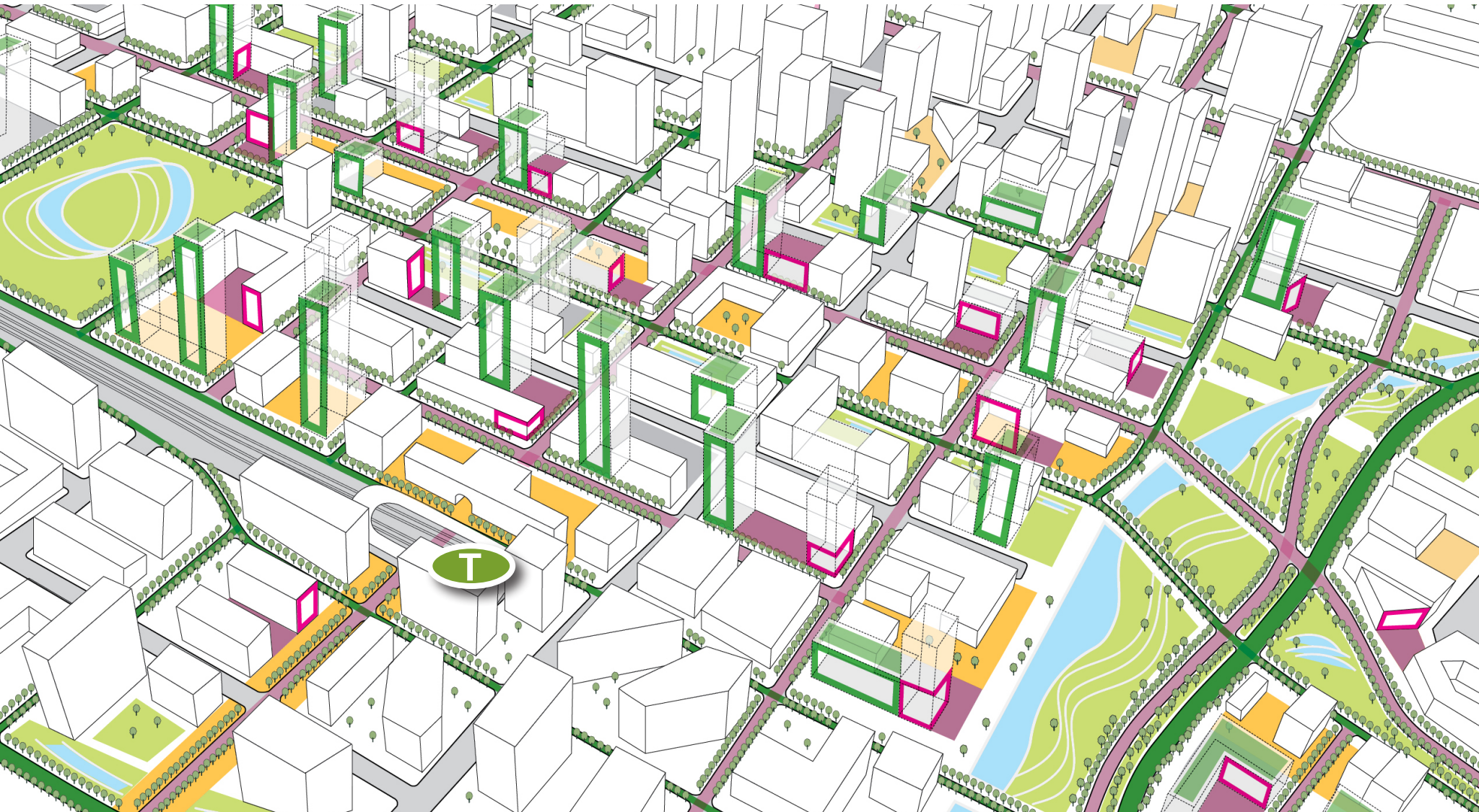
Lease ground/lower floors and adjoining outdoor space for hubs

Nonprofit

Fund an executive director for hubs; coordinate a walking school bus

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Downtowns Create Diversified, Decarbonized, Affordable, Live-in CBDs



Stage 5 Decarbonize the district

Government

Set carbon budget; add district energy and automated waste collection

Real estate

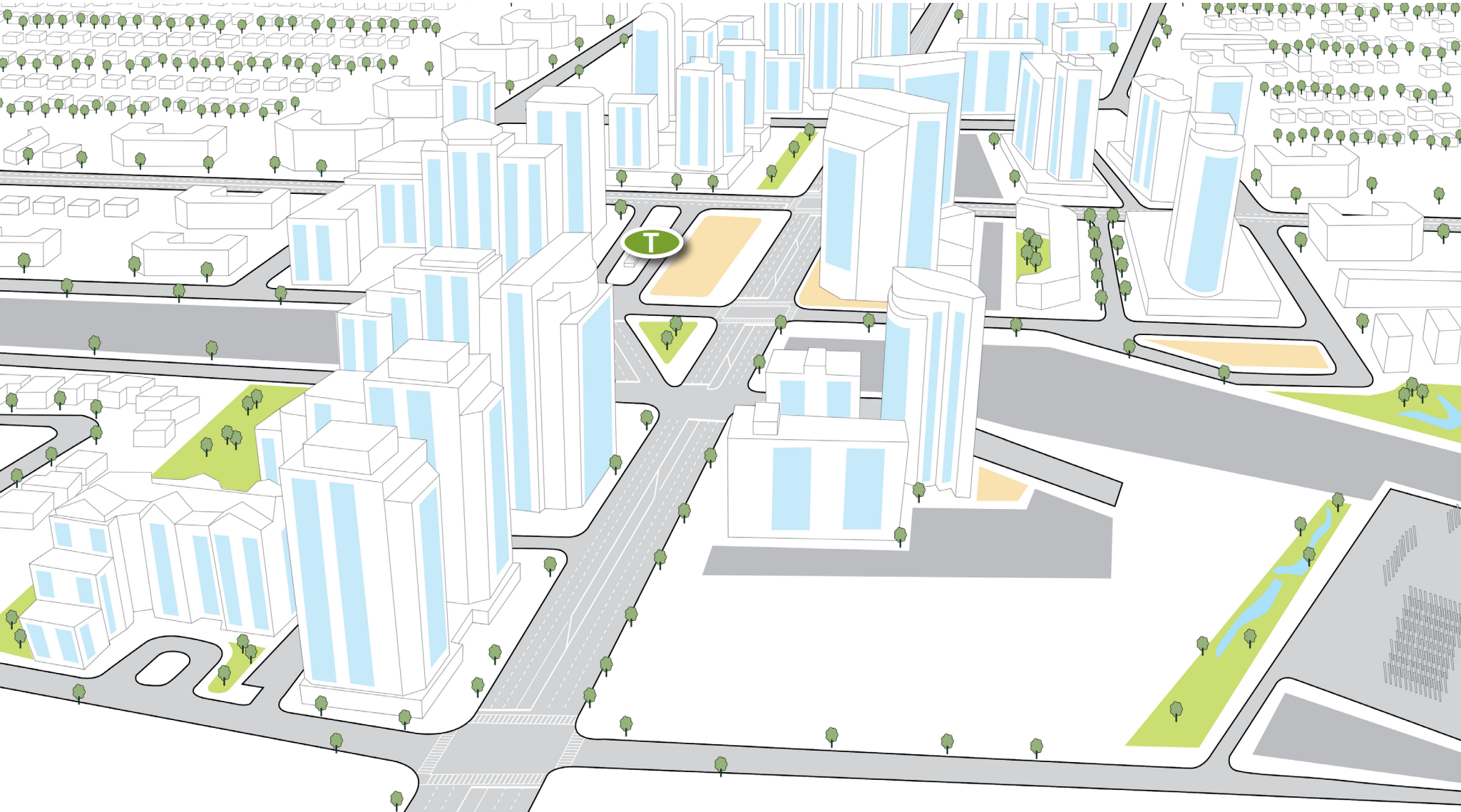
Add solar photovoltaics and biophilia elements; build with mass timber; update operation practices

Nonprofit

Run urban agriculture and waste-reduction programs

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Edge Cities Create Heat-proof, All-ages-Friendly communities



Stage 1
Reduce heat risks; develop a plan for extreme-heat response

Government

Develop a local extreme-heat response plan; conduct financial planning for reducing heat risk

Real estate

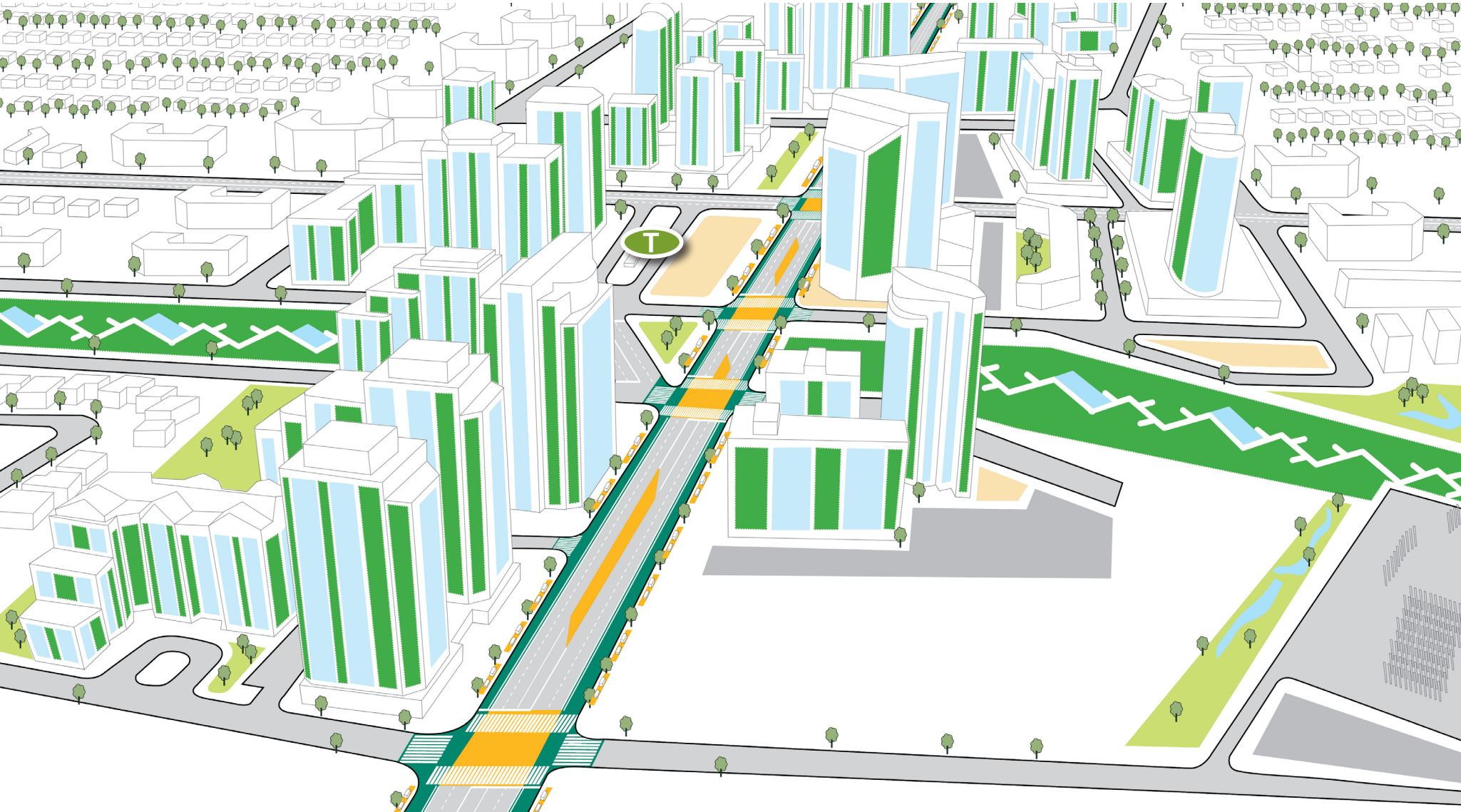
Work with financiers and insurers to create sustainable capital for heat reduction

Nonprofit

Create a three-dimensional GIS-based community-scale performance model to plan for heat response

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Edge Cities Create Heat-proof, All-ages-Friendly communities



Stage 2 Heat-proof the community and add green infrastructure

Government

Implement road diet; install street trees and broadband; designate cooling centers

Real estate

Install green walls and rooftop gardens; improve accessibility and digital connectivity

Nonprofit

Convert parking lots into green spaces; arrange extreme-heat and blackout support

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Edge Cities Create Heat-proof, All-ages-Friendly communities



Stage 3
Decarbonize the area; improve livability for all age groups

Government

Create a decarbonization plan; switch to renewable energy and reduce waste

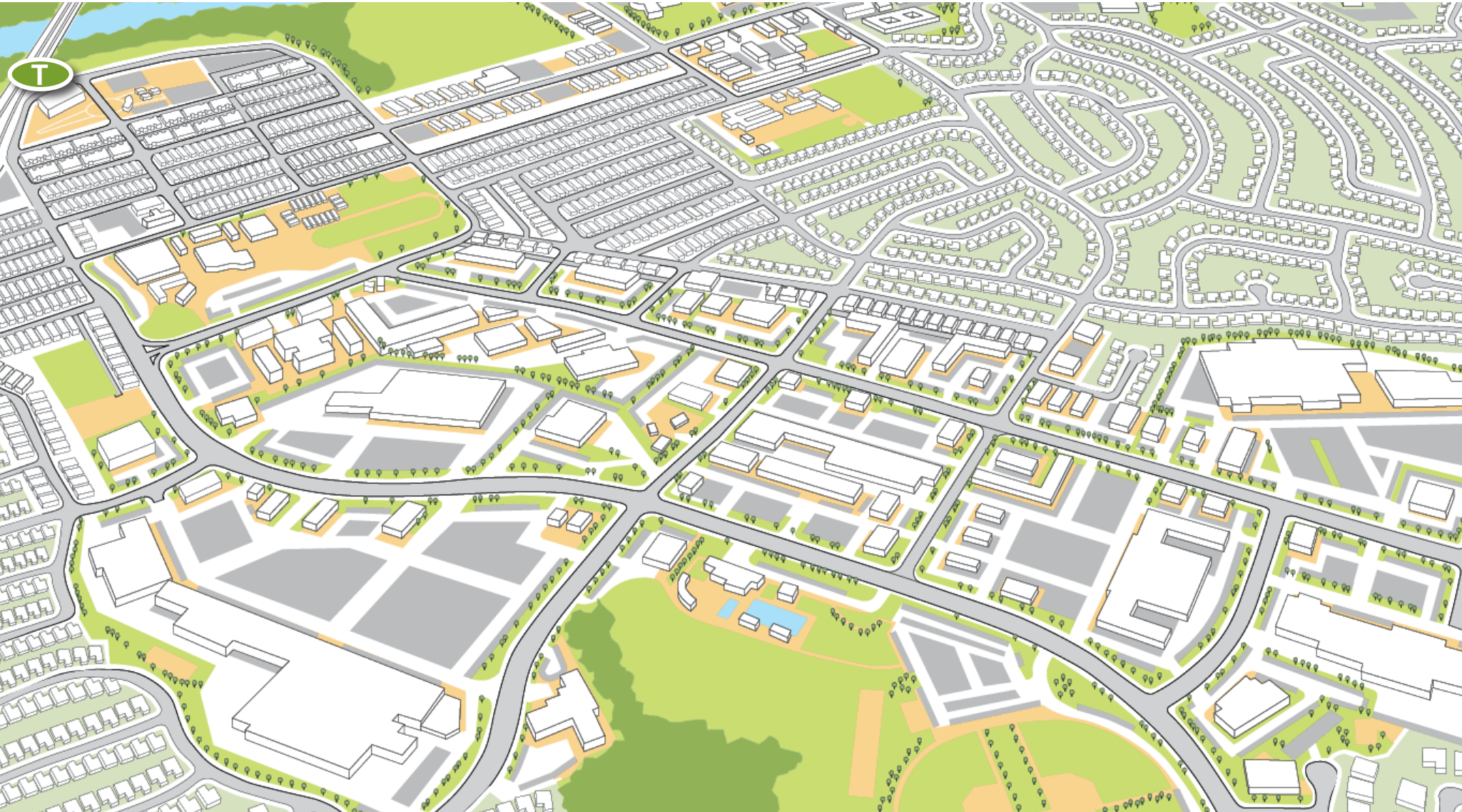
Real estate

Decarbonize buildings; provide on-site child care, senior care, and health care facilities

Nonprofit

Host recycling, composting, and planting campaigns

Suburban Corridors Densify into Walkable, Mixed-use Innovation Districts



Stage 1

Align decisions to build dense, walkable, mixed-use development

Government

Prioritize vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) reduction to drive mixed-use densification

Real estate

Create a district-scale vision; assist government and landowners in delivering mixed-use development

Nonprofit

Establish a local advisory group; develop ways to improve last-mile delivery

Suburban Corridors Densify into Walkable, Mixed-use Innovation Districts



Stage 2
Reduce daily trips by residents

Government

Deliver a network of walkable hubs; add broadband service

Real estate

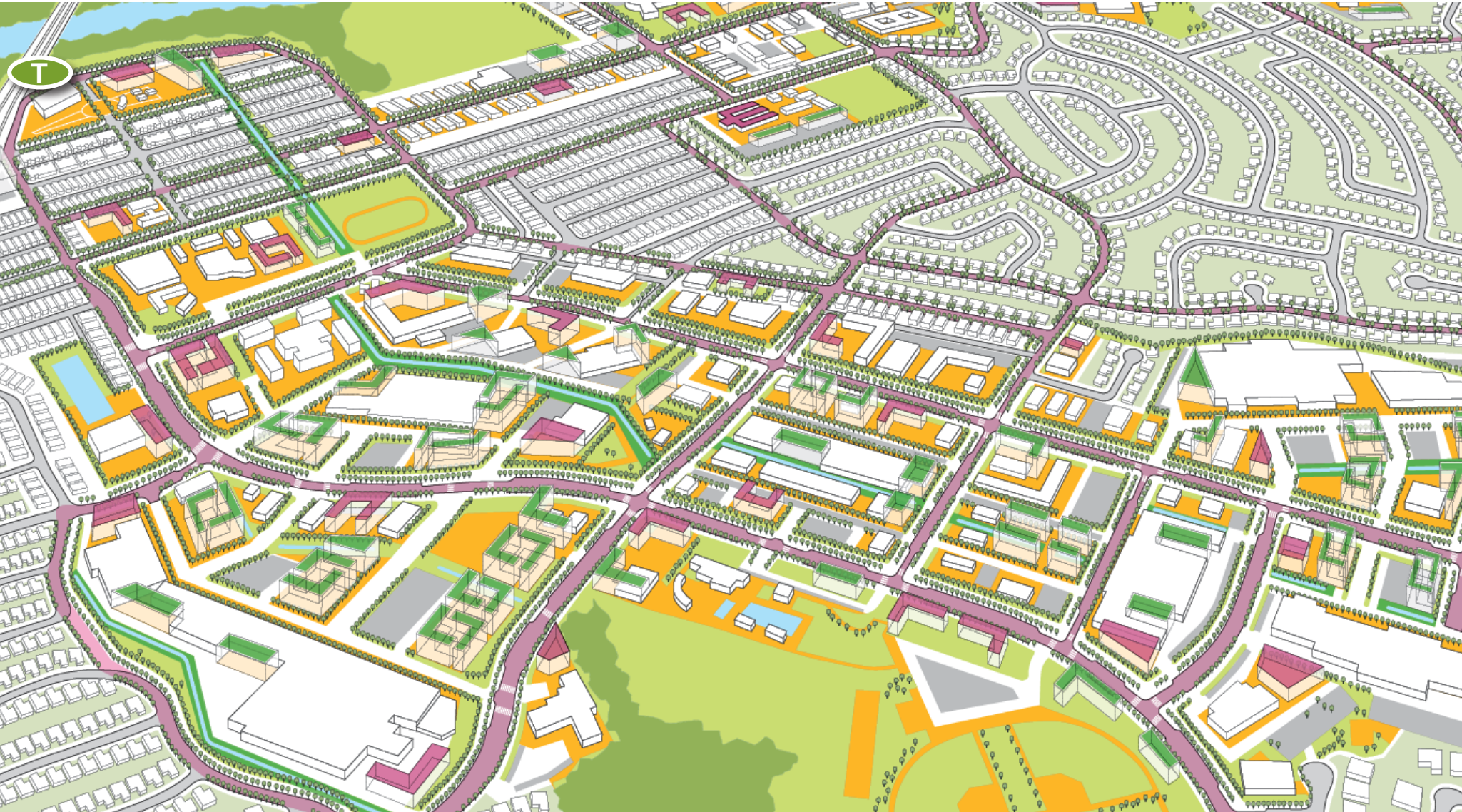
Deliver hubs with new multifamily housing; add micro-mobility

Nonprofit

Coordinate walking school bus and school streets programs

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Suburban Corridors Densify into Walkable, Mixed-use Innovation Districts



Stage 3

Reduce daily trips by workers; add innovation jobs

Government

Install urban greenways; increase public green spaces

Real estate

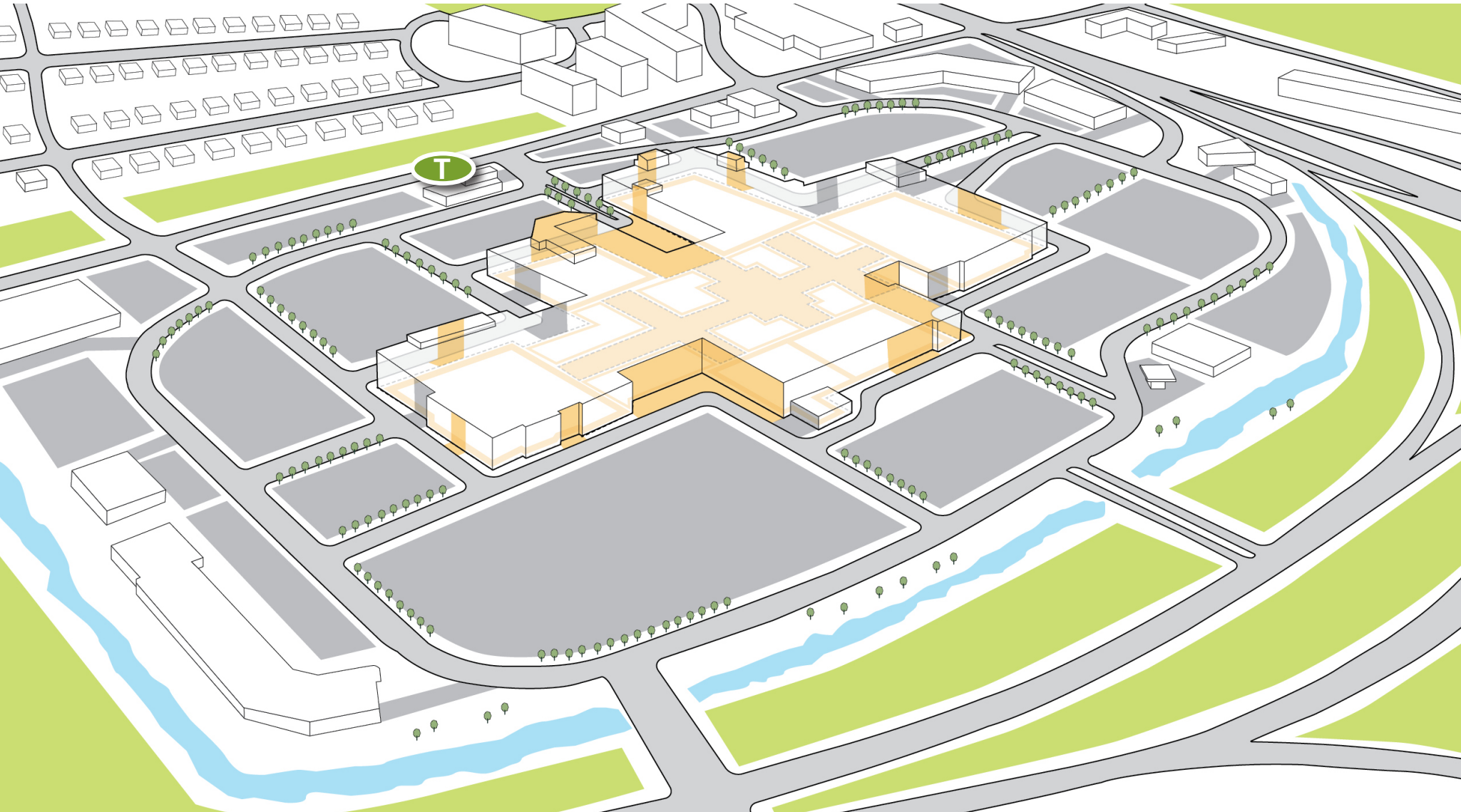
Build mixed-use development with indoor and outdoor event spaces

Nonprofit

Create an innovation hub to boost innovation economy

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Malls Transform into Transit- and Trail-Oriented Mixed-use Communities



Stage 1

Create a transit- or trail-oriented walkable, mixed-use district

Government

Create a vision; improve transit, active mobility, and infrastructure; provide regulatory oversight

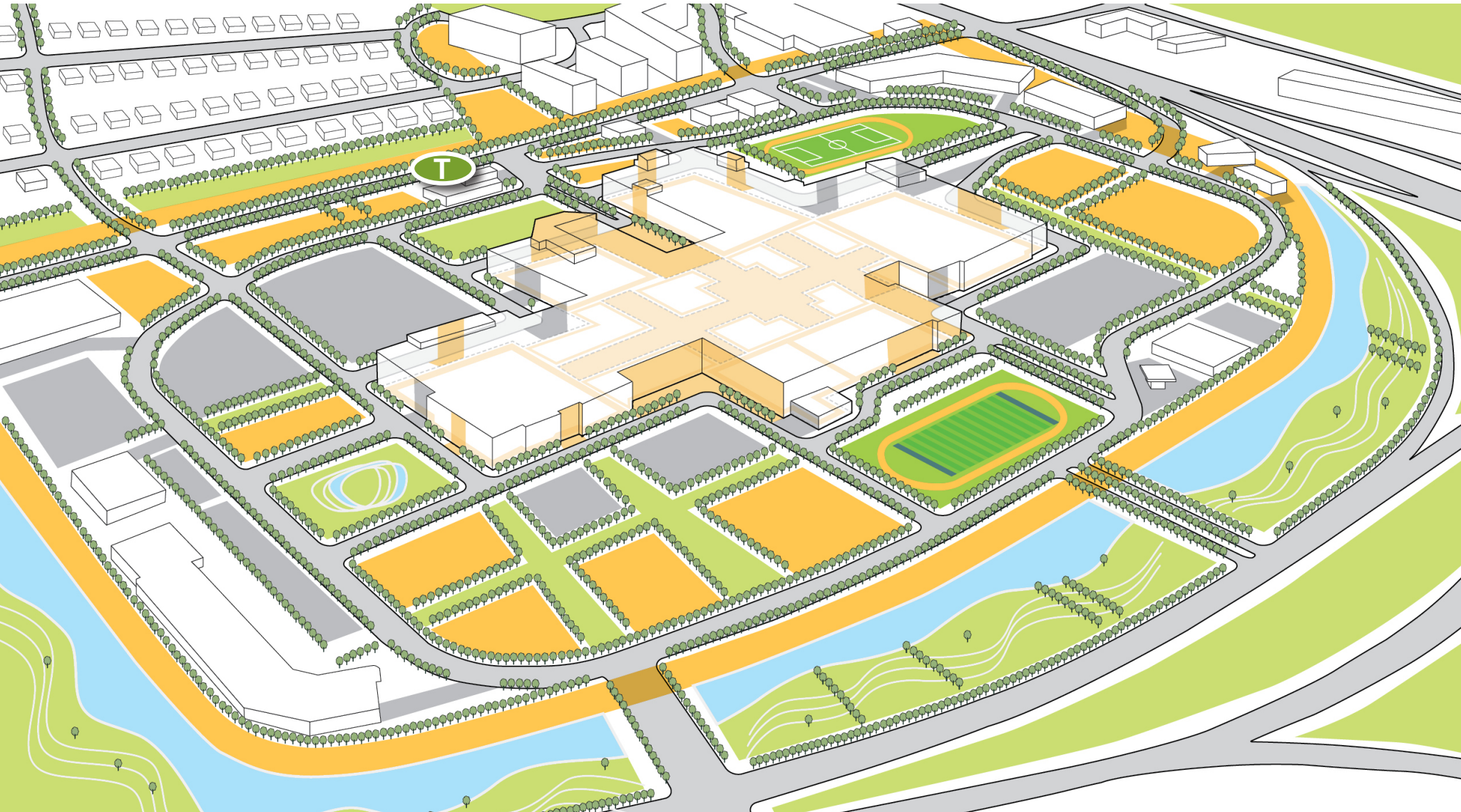
Real estate

Densify development with on-site services; add multisensory experiences; knit together new and existing places

Nonprofit

Host cultural programs; boost healthy food and wellness culture

Malls Transform into Transit- and Trail-Oriented Mixed-use Communities



Stage 2
Combine
ownerships and
easements for
redevelopment

Government

Connect communities; prioritize infill development on parking lots or full reuse of malls; extend streets, trails, and green-space networks

Real estate

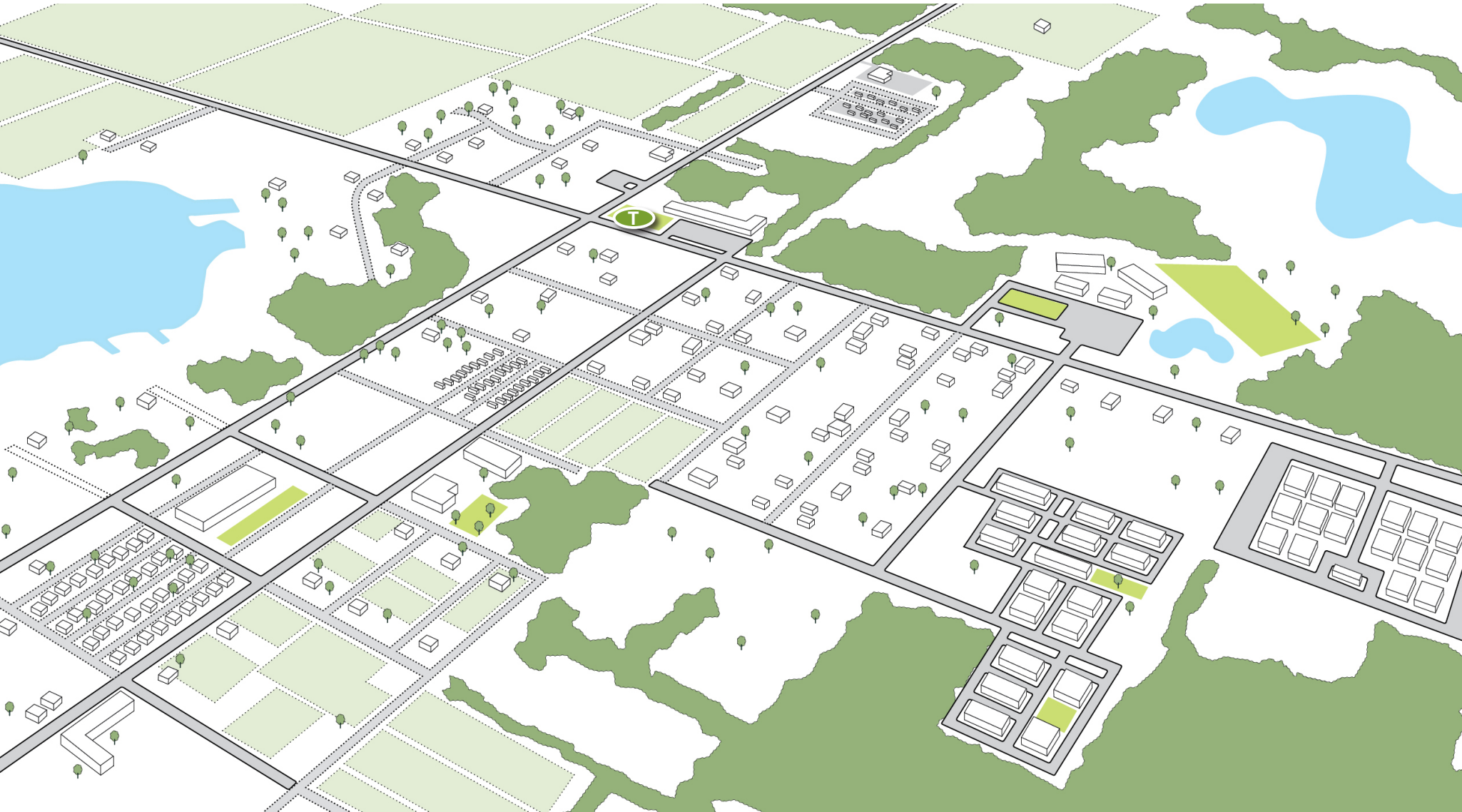
Convert driveways into urban mixed-use streets; shift to renewable energy; blend uses to provide a healthy, active, open-air environment

Nonprofit

Provide community car-sharing and active mobility; set up a community hub and introduce programming

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Exurbs Activate as Working Landscape of Agrihoods and Nature-Based Solutions



Stage 1
Create an agricultural heritage district

Government

Establish a district commission; update policies; facilitate partnerships

Real estate

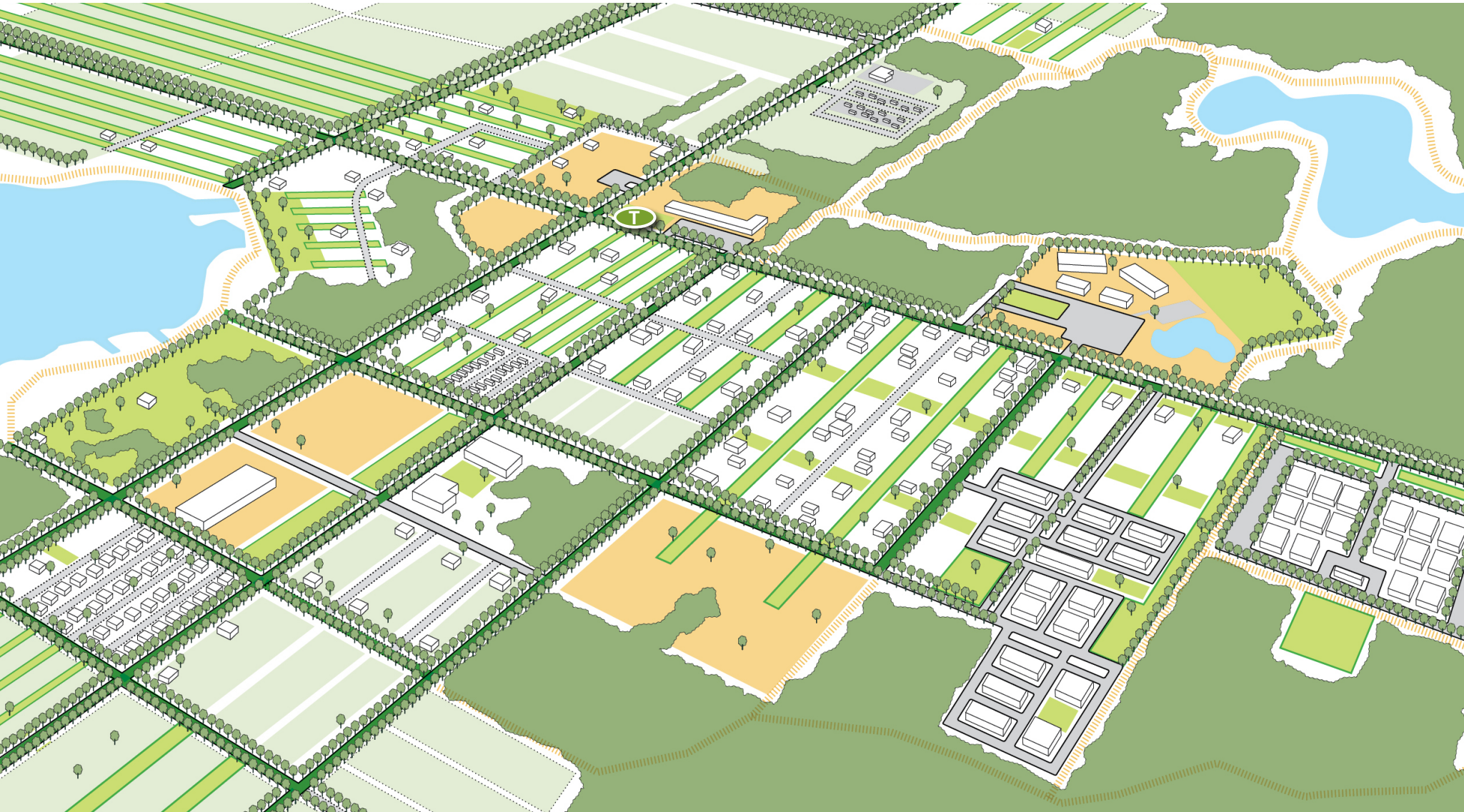
Create investment opportunities for carbon credits, vertical farming, and solar PV

Nonprofit

Establish a community land trust to conserve natural resources

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Exurbs Activate as Working Landscape of Agrihoods and Nature-Based Solutions



Stage 2 Decarbonize and restore nature

Government

Connect ecosystems;
restore forests; expand trail
and cycling networks

Real estate

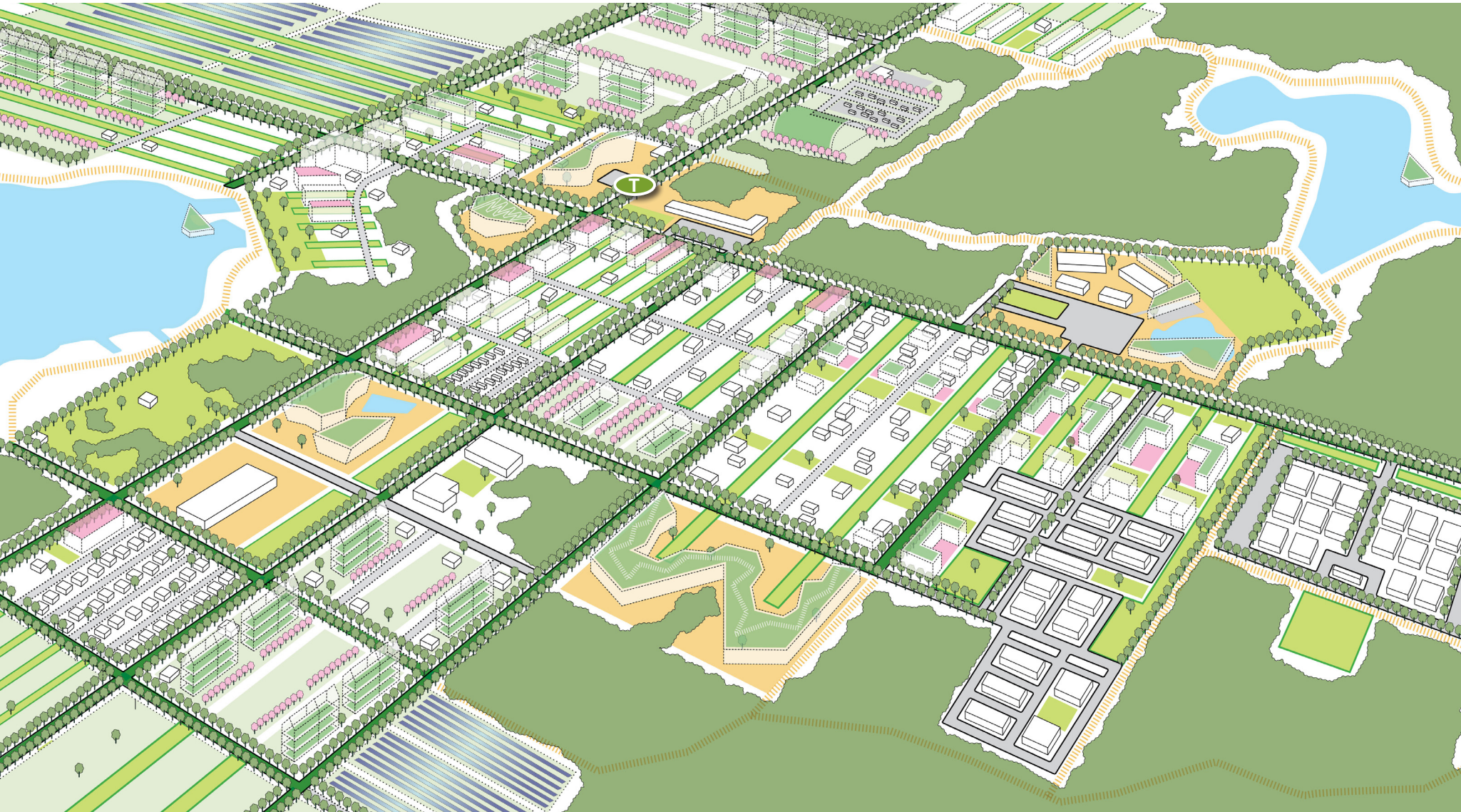
Implement regenerative
farming and food-based
planting in community

Nonprofit

Host agribusiness
and youth enterprise
programs

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Exurbs Activate as Working Landscape of Agrihoods and Nature-Based Solutions



Stage 3

**Add amenities;
promote research
on nature-based
solutions**

Government

Arrange on-demand transit service; streamline permitting

Real estate

Build agriculture-focused main streets; add renewable energy infrastructure; create agrihoods

Nonprofit

Set up a large-scale nature-based solutions research campus with higher-education institutions

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Success comes from six key decision shifts

TOD to TOC

Shift from building buildings to building communities.

Mega facility to local facility

Plan facilities with walkable catchments.

Automobile-centric to people centric

Making walking and cycling the top choices.

2D decisions to 3D decisions

Create joint use by sharing space and sharing time.

Gray to green

Replace gray infrastructure like parking lots with parks and regional greenways.

“Just in time” to “just in case”

Make proactive decisions. Start building 15-minute communities today.

“Thoughtful leaders get results through people by making clear what needs to be done, why it should be done, and how each person can contribute.”

—Jim Fisher, University of Toronto Rotman School of Management



In a transit-oriented community, every block acts as a miniature neighborhood, and every building and outdoor space contributes to enhanced livability. (ULI Toronto)

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Success comes from walk-centric leadership



In Clarence Perry's neighborhood unit plan, schools and parks are at the center of a walkable, mixed-use community with walkable streets and local shops. (Clarence Perry, New York City Planning Department, 1929)



In Carlos Moreno's 15-minute Paris plan, one place has several uses, each use bring new creativity. It provides a journey to find humanity at the end of every street, to give a heart to the heart of the city. (N. Bascop for Paris En Commun, 2019)



Los Angeles's Livable Communities Initiative aims at solving our housing crisis while delivering the beauty and convenience of a 15-minute city. (Livable Communities Initiative, 2022)

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Success comes from effective partnerships

6 Geographies

- Vision
- The 15-Minute community experience
- Infrastructure needs
- Real estate opportunities

Downtowns Create Diversified, Decarbonized, Affordable, Live-in CBDs

"As a kid, I carried my cello to school, rode my bike to after-school programs at the fieldhouse in the park, ran errands to the corner grocery store, and safely played on the sidewalk until the streetlights came on. It was a 15-minute complete community."
 —Lucia Garsys, ULI Infrastructure Forum Leadership

North America has hundreds of downtowns that serve as economic drivers for cities. In the largest 30 downtowns, most buildings are used as office space, with the rest used for cultural institutions, tourism, and retail space, supported by rapid transit and some multifamily housing. This model, with much of the

workforce commuting into the downtown area, entails extensive parking facilities and automobile-centric roads that are costly to maintain. Often, insufficient funds remain for community infrastructure to serve local residents.

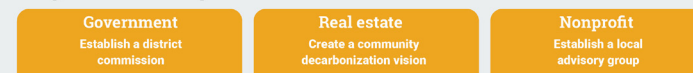
In recent years, with more people choosing to work from home, developers in cities such as Philadelphia, Chicago, New York City, and elsewhere have pushed to convert office space into housing. According to a December 2022 report, more than 11,000 multifamily units were created from office conversions in 2021–2022, and 77,000 additional units are in the pipeline.⁴⁰ This growth in residential populations requires immediate solutions to shift CBDs into "live-in" downtowns.

Potential stages of actions	Government	Real estate	Nonprofit
Stage 1: Create a special district	Establish a district commission	Create a community decarbonization vision	Establish a local advisory group
Stage 2: Convert gray infrastructure to green infrastructure	Connect green spaces; implement road diets	Convert spaces for pop-ups and socializing	Host cultural programs
Stage 3: Improve walking and cycling	Reduce parking; expand bikeways; increase transit	Convert vacant spaces into housing; add micro-mobility options	Develop a districtwide "one-trip" crowdsourcing app
Stage 4: Create a network of community hubs offering a variety of community services	Identify hub locations and co-locate public services in hubs	Lease ground/lower floors and adjoining outdoor space for hubs	Fund an executive director for hubs; coordinate a walking school bus
Stage 5: Decarbonize the district	Set carbon budget; add district energy and automated waste collection	Add solar photovoltaics and biophilia elements; build with mass timber; update operation practices	Run urban agriculture and waste-reduction programs

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15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

Stage 1: Create a special district



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3 to 5 Stages

- Typical conditions
- Government role
- Real estate role
- Nonprofit role

Downtowns

Edge Cities

Suburban Corridors

Decarbonize the area; improve livability for all age groups	Plan, switch to renewable energy and reduce waste	Senior care, and health care facilities	Composting, and planting campaigns
Reduce density in the city center; add innovation jobs	Increase public green spaces	Development with indoor and outdoor event spaces	Grow a local innovation economy
Invest in transit infrastructure	Extend streets, trails, and green-space networks	Healthy, active, open-air environment	Introduce programming
Add amenities; promote research on nature-based solutions	Streamline permitting; streamline transit service	Energy infrastructure; create agrifoods	Campus with higher-education institutions
Improve transit network; modal split ratio.	Reduce miles traveled per trip; and parking reduction	Framework and a parking reduction plan	Streamline permitting processes

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Malls

Exurbs

Metro Regions

An example of transit-oriented communities organized at the metro region scale. Transit lines connect a network of local walkable communities. (Yvonne Young)

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

from ULI Curtis Infrastructure Global Board



“Walkable urbanism can be accomplished at many scales – from small towns to large metropolitan cities. Compact critical mass is the key – having many places to walk or bike to in 15 minutes.”

“We have the opportunity to repair environmental damage with new green infrastructure that delivers a more human and ecologically supportive place.”

Craig Lewis

ULI Curtis Infrastructure Initiative Global Board Chair

15-Minute Communities Leadership Strategies

from ULI Infrastructure Forum Leadership . . .

"A 15-minute complete community is where I can access most of my daily life when I'm young and old."

William Anderson

"As a kid, I carried my cello to school, rode my bike to after-school programs at the fieldhouse in the park, ran errands to the corner grocery store, and safely played on the sidewalk until the streetlights came on. It was a 15-minute complete community."

Lucia Garsys

"A 15-minute community is a place where I do not need a car to get around and have all I need within walking distance of my home. Such places exist, and we can apply what we have learned from these places as we conceive of future communities."

Renee Schoonbeek



In Clarence Perry's neighborhood unit plan, schools and parks are at the center of a walkable, mixed-use community. (Clarence Perry, 1929)

"In a world that can be dominated by pro forma, performance goals, and delivery methods, the concept of 15-minute communities brings the important dimension of scale back into city building."

Gullivar Shepard

"15-minute communities can free their users from the isolation of automobile travel. Neighbors, retail clerks, business owners, and educators become friends, and their community becomes a place of gathering."

Kevin Augustyn

"Effective urban planning leadership for 15-minute communities requires combined budgets and strategic thinking, collaborative skills, and a commitment to sustainability, equity, and resilience."

Stephen Engblom

"Cities are integrated and living organisms; siloed planning is no longer effective. Human-centric cities take into account the relationship between new location decisions for infrastructure that are essential for integrated local area planning."

Matthew Kwatinetz

Special Thanks to . . .

ULI Infrastructure Forum Leadership Team



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Gullivar Shepard, Partner, Michael Van

Valkenburgh Associates Inc

Yvonne Yeung, Curtis Infrastructure Fellow, Urban Land Institute

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uli.org/infrastructure**

