

Can California's SB-79 Help Make Transit Work Where It Wasn't Meant To?

October 22, 2025 | 12- 1 PM PST

Students of planning know that improving public transit is a necessary but not sufficient strategy for increasing transit use – land use is equally important and is often the more challenging component of the equation in U.S. cities. With the recent adoption of SB-79, California has taken a great leap forward in enabling Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). InfraStrategies Partner Joshua Schank, Ph.D., and Principal Consultant Erin Barry (USC Price MPA '25) have explored TOD efforts while working on projects with transit and planning agencies in Los Angeles, Silicon Valley, and the Dallas-Fort Worth region. These areas share one critical trait in common: sprawl that makes transit very challenging. This seminar will discuss these three urban case studies to explore the role that transit agencies, municipalities, developers, and metropolitan planning organizations can play in incentivizing TOD in California and maximizing the benefits of SB-79.



As a Partner at InfraStrategies, Joshua leads a practice focused on innovation, strategic planning, and technology. Joshua Schank has been at the forefront of making change in the transportation industry for almost 30 years, having worked at transit agencies, the federal government, think-tanks, universities, and as a consultant. Joshua holds a Ph.D. in Urban Planning from Columbia University, and a Master of City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



Erin is a Principal Consultant specializing in transportation policy, innovative partnerships, and strategic planning for transportation and planning agencies across the country. At InfraStrategies, Erin is currently developing recommendations at the intersection of politics, policy, and planning for the North Central Texas Council of Governments to improve regional collaboration and connectivity for the greater Dallas-Fort Worth region. She holds a Master of Public Administration from the University of Southern California's Sol Price School of Public Policy and a Bachelor of Arts from Pomona College.



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