

TCRPC

Planning Toolkit Fact Sheet

Transit Oriented Development



INTRODUCTION

Transit oriented development is a set of policies and land use controls that result in a community or neighborhood centered around existing or proposed transit stops. Properly conceived TODs can enhance transit ridership, decrease auto-dependency, support walkability and contribute to a vibrant neighborhood.

TOD policies can be applied to an overall transit network, but they are generally considered on the sub-regional level, specifically within a half-mile of commuter-rail stops or a quarter-mile of bus stops. In TOD areas, higher densities and mixed-use development are preferred. Additionally, street patterns are highly connected with adequate sidewalks and bicycle facilities. Finally, parking policies should limit or eliminate minimums and may even impose parking maximums. These policies will help drive transit ridership by supporting auto-free households, providing walkable destinations within the neighborhood and facilitating pedestrian circulation within the neighborhood to the transit stop.

Planning for TODs should precede any investment or reinvestment from the transit provider on the stops. This will allow the municipality to adequately address infrastructure needs including street connectivity and prepare the regulatory mechanisms to promote the desired development. Overlay zoning districts are an easy way to govern use, density and parking without rezoning the base districts.

Rail transit tends to sustain the largest investment in development because stops are more permanent and rail transit is perceived in a more positive manner. However, municipalities are starting to apply appropriate policies and/or limit the geographic boundaries for bus stop TODs.

BENEFITS

- Helps create walkable, auto-independent communities
- Increases ridership on the transit system
- Can spur development/redevelopment
- Increases accessibility to work and shopping, especially for Environmental Justice communities

DRAWBACKS

- Emphasis on density and redevelopment can upset current residents
- Can include costly public infrastructure investments
- Requires coordinated set of policies and investments

PRACTICAL TIPS

- Coordinate early with transit provider
- Brand TOD neighborhoods to increase their visibility
- Identify and advertise the benefits of TOD on the municipal tax rolls, property owners and business community



RESOURCES

Transit Services

- **Capital Area Transit (CAT)**
- **Amtrak**

Guides and Examples

- **Transit Street Design Guide**
- **Federal Transit Administration TOD Guidelines**
- **PennDOT “Encouraging Multimodal Transportation” Fact Sheet**

RELATED TOOLKIT FACT SHEETS

- **Complete Streets**
- **Connectivity**
- **Main Street Programs**

