

## Part II - TOD Definition and Principles

### TOD DEFINITION

Transit-oriented development is the functional integration of land use and transit via the creation of compact, walkable, mixed-use communities within walking distance of a transit stop or station. A TOD brings together people, jobs, and services and is designed in a way that makes it efficient, safe, and convenient to travel on foot or by bicycle, transit, or car.

### TOD PRINCIPLES

Plan for TOD a quarter to a half-mile from a transit station (rail, rapid bus, trolley, etc.) as this is considered to be an appropriate scale for pedestrians.

Design a compact development with the transit station as the prominent feature of the site, ideally located at the center of the site rather than the periphery.

Design and position the station to foster the creation of an activity center that surrounds the station on all sides.

Ensure that the design of the station is of high quality and reflects the character of the surrounding community.

Surround the transit station with relatively high-density development with progressively lower-density development spreading outwards from the center; locate moderate to higher-density residential development within an easy walk of the transit stop to strengthen demand for transit.

Combine housing with retail and community services to foster the creation of walkable neighborhoods, street life, and a sense of community.

Incorporate retail into the development if it is a viable use at the location without the transit component, ideally drawing customers both from both the TOD and a major street; do not require retail in a certain location if it does not have the necessary customer access and is not supported by market demand.

Limit the uses immediately adjacent to the transit stop to those that are compatible with and supportive of the transit stop and those living and working there.

Encourage walking and cycling throughout a TOD by creating a design with the comfort and convenience of pedestrians and bicyclists as the highest priority, without excluding the auto.

Create an urban rather than a suburban pattern of development with compact blocks, pleasant walkways, and comfortable, well-marked, and continuous streetfronts.

Incorporate a diversity of building forms for residential, office, retail and mixed use structures.

Provide various housing types suited to people of a wide range of ages and incomes.

Include engaging, high quality civic spaces (e.g. plazas) with attractive street furniture and public art as organizing features and gathering places for the neighborhood.

Integrate recreational public uses such as greenbelts and parks.

Create attractive landmarks and gateways to the development.

Avoid creating, or reduce, a sense of auto domination by introducing creative parking strategies that integrate, rather than divide, the various site areas.

Recognize that all TODs are not the same; each development is located within its own unique context and serves a specific purpose in the larger context.

Ensure that development transitions appropriately to the surrounding community.

Make TOD plans flexible so they can respond to changing conditions.

Encourage public-private or public-public partnerships to share risks, costs, and rewards of a development project.

Create a network of TODs with balanced or special uses that are connected for efficient rail travel with bi-directional travel flows.

Include coordinated public transit feeder systems into the TOD.

### **Part III - TOD Mission and Goals**

In support of the vision and recommendations made by the Citizens' Planning Committee and the Citizens' Planning and Implementation Committee, the vision created during the Envision Central Texas process, and Capital Metro's All Systems Go Long-Range Transit Plan, the City of Austin's Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) program will promote development patterns that integrate and optimize the land use-transportation connection and work towards achieving the following citywide, and in some cases, regional goals:

Reduce urban sprawl

Improve air quality

Manage traffic congestion

Decrease dependence on the automobile

Increase housing options suited to a mix of generations and incomes

Improve the design quality of the built environment

Support transit and increase ridership of publicly funded transit investments

Foster economic development, an enhanced tax base and the potential for revenue from public-sector real estate assets

Increase the predictability and consistency of the development process

Enhance the overall quality of life of Austin's residents

In addition to these goals, some of the benefits of TOD that the City of Austin hopes to achieve are:

- ◇ Creating vibrant, livable communities that are better places to live, work, stop, recreate, interact, and play
- ◇ Providing greater transportation choices (walking, bicycling, transit, carshare, etc.)
- ◇ Reducing household spending on transportation

Draft - Transit-Oriented Development Guidebook  
Neighborhood Planning & Zoning Department, City of Austin

- ◇ Locating daily shopping needs within close proximity of employment and housing
- ◇ Achieving healthier lifestyles due to increased walking and bicycling
- ◇ Experiencing positive effects on property values within and around a TOD district
- ◇ Increasing foot traffic and customer base for area businesses