

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)



Roundhouse Parking Lot project, Northampton

What is the objective of Transit Oriented Development?

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) promotes a balance of jobs and housing, encourages the use of bus and other transit opportunities, while reducing single occupant vehicle trips and discouraging suburban sprawl. To begin to limit sprawl, improve air quality and provide access to goods, services and jobs in close proximity to residential areas, TODs offer opportunities for mixed-use development served by transit in higher density developments.

Why is Transit Oriented Development needed?

Concentrated mixed-use development and transit availability address the issues of sprawl, air quality, declining urban centers and variety in housing. TOD regulations can help limit sprawl by enabling mixed-uses and higher densities near transit stops with a good pedestrian access system. TODs reduce car trips, protect environmental quality and increase the pedestrian access network. The tax base is strengthened and new jobs infuse the local economy with increased activity.

How does Transit Oriented Development work?

Communities can create TOD zones within walking distance of major transit lines in urbanized areas, which allow for higher density and mixed-use. TODs typically consist of a mixed-use core commercial area adjacent to the transit stop. Surrounding the core commercial area is a mix of housing types, including small-lot single family, townhouses, condominiums, and apartments. TODs also include public uses, such as parks, plazas, greens, public buildings, and public services. Other transit and pedestrian-friendly strategies include: 1) Reducing parking requirements for developments in TOD zones in anticipation of decreased automobile use, 2) Creating a comfortable pedestrian environment with tree-lined streets and sidewalks and well-defined transit stops to promote transit use, and 3) Providing incentives to developers for installing transit amenities such as bus shelters or benches.

DID YOU KNOW...

TODs are generally located within one-quarter to one-half mile from a transit stop.

EXAMPLES FROM THE PIONEER VALLEY

City of Northampton

The roundhouse parking lot project in the city of Northampton is an example of infill, brownfields re-development, and transit oriented development. The project is located in close proximity to the existing Peter Pan bus station and immediately adjacent to the primary PVTA transit pulse point for northern Hampshire County. The 146 PVTA/FRTA buses arrive and depart at this transit pulse point per work day. The project consists of a hotel, restaurant and conference space with a parking garage. In addition to transit access via the Peter Pan bus company and the PVTA/FRTA, the hotel will be running a bus shuttle service to the 5 colleges and Bradley International airport in Windsor Locks, CT. In addition to being serviced by the three sources of transit, the site is also located on a key route for bicyclists and pedestrians and is served by a local taxi company. The project is the hub of a city-identified TOD district that includes tax-credit affordable housing as well as high-end market housing.

EXAMPLES FROM OUTSIDE THE PIONEER VALLEY

For more information on examples of Transit Oriented Development from across Massachusetts, please refer to the state's [Smart Growth / Smart Energy Toolkit](#) developed by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

[MODEL TOD BYLAW, \(EOEEA\)](#)