

Transit-Oriented Development Policy

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) is the steward of a large-scale public investment. The success of the transit system is directly related to the ease of access by riders. The RTA's vision for transit-oriented development (TOD) is to encourage compact, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, high quality development at and around rail and bus stations and corridors that increases ridership to the system, supports long-term system capacity, promotes livable communities, and has the potential to generate additional funding for transit. TOD areas are defined as the half-mile radius from rail stations and quarter-mile radius from bus stations and corridors.

RTA, in conjunction with our service boards CTA, Metra, and Pace, is a leader in advancing the regional policy of encouraging growth near transit. RTA's role in TOD is to support municipalities and regional agencies in attaining their community and economic development goals and initiatives by serving as a resource, supporting partner, and community educator.

Since there is no one-size-fits-all approach to TOD, RTA has identified four key goals to best achieve success:

1. Foster Relationships
2. Promote Implementation
3. Encourage Livability Through Walkability and Multi-modalism
4. Promote and Enhance Existing Assets

Goals and Strategies

Goal 1: RTA will foster relationships with local jurisdictions, regional agencies, private developers, transit agencies, local residents and businesses, and other stakeholders to support TOD.

Strategies to achieve this goal include:

- a. Provide funding and planning assistance for local TOD planning and collaboration through the continuation of the RTA's Community Planning and Subregional Planning programs.
- b. Serve as a resource and expert to local jurisdictions to plan for and encourage TOD
- c. Support CMAP's GoTo 2040 strategy of increasing TOD and encourage many of the transit related recommendations.
- d. Work with advocacy organizations to promote TOD education and best practices.
- e. Engage the private sector and local citizens to ensure plans are realistic and implementable.
- f. Employ community involvement techniques in the formation of plans that help to reflect the desires of local citizens.
- g. Continue coordination with service boards in TOD planning.
- h. Meet regularly with the RTA's Regional TOD Working Group (comprised of representatives from the service boards, advocacy and not for profit agencies, IDOT, and the City of Chicago) to coordinate TOD efforts and to form and pursue TOD related goals.

Goal 2: RTA, partnering with CMAP, will lead coordination and technical assistance efforts to implement local TOD plans.

Strategies to achieve this goal include:

- a. Fund implementation studies through the Community Planning and Subregional Planning Programs.
- b. Track TOD implementation efforts throughout the region.
- c. Offer technical assistance to local communities and act as a liaison between local governments and the private sector
- d. Promote new development around stations that encourages compact design, mix of uses, quality-attractive buildings, and is pedestrian oriented to allow for easy access to transit facilities.
- e. Encourage local municipalities to adopt TOD supportive policies, plans, and zoning for transit stations and corridors within their jurisdiction that provide flexible framework for TOD and prevent development that does not support transit.
- f. Promote coordination amongst various governmental agencies to facilitate TOD.

Goal 3: RTA will encourage the creation of livable communities at and around transit stations and corridors by supporting high quality walking environments and promoting multi-modal access.

Strategies to achieve this goal include:

- a. Reduce the access mode share of the automobile by encouraging and enhancing multi-modal access to and from stations, where appropriate, in partnership with communities and transit providers.
- b. Promote reduced commute distances and volumes by encouraging multi-modal solutions that interface with transit-oriented, mixed-use community development.
- c. Promote safe and comfortable walking and biking to and from stations via sidewalks and paths, as appropriate.
- d. Encourage appropriate and innovative parking solutions in the context of the development.
- e. Encourage a variety of housing types and price ranges at or around station and corridors where appropriate.
- f. Encourage the location of jobs near transit stations and corridors.
- g. Promote the strategies and requirements of LEED for Neighborhood Design (LEED-ND), which integrate the principles of smart growth, urbanism and green building.

Goal 4: RTA will promote and enhance the it's existing transit assets and investments

Strategies to achieve this goal include:

- a. Consider TOD as an opportunity to increase the value of land near stations and along corridors.
- b. Encourage service boards and other agencies to consider joint development of underutilized properties to create high quality TOD, where appropriate.
- c. Encourage development that makes transit use easy and accessible to generate new riders and revenue.

- d. Encourage leveraging federal investment in the regional transit network by ensuring plans provide information needed for the economic development and community support portions of various federal and state funding programs.
- e. Encourage communities to coordinate with the RTA and the appropriate service boards when evaluating large-scale development that can affect ridership and use of the transit system.
- f. Potentially generate new revenues through increased sales tax, value capture strategies, and farebox revenues.