What is TOD?

Transit-oriented development, or TOD, is a pattern of development that creates moderate to high density communities that include a mixture of housing, office, retail, and other amenities integrated into a walkable environment located within a half-mile of public transportation options. Such communities with these four principles increase transit access for individuals while also broadening their opportunities for housing, employment, and services.

Benefits of Transit-Oriented-Development

- **Density**: Urban growth that is denser than that of auto-oriented growth, with compact development that easily connects people to places and that locates needed supporting infrastructure close together.
- **Mixed Use**: Development styles and patterns where a building, block, or neighborhood are used for more than one purpose. This can mean the zoning allows for some combination of residential, commercial, industrial, office, institutional, or other land uses. A mix of activities along the streets encourages fewer car trips and creates more lively neighborhoods.
- **Walkability**: This is a measure of how friendly an area is to walking. Factors influencing walkability include the presence of sidewalks and crosswalks, access to transit, calm vehicular traffic, land use patterns, and building accessibility. When all these elements come together they create vibrant and active places where people feel safe to walk, leading to many health, environmental, and economic benefits.
- **Transit**: The presence of high-quality transit infrastructure and convenient transit service is critical to thriving and equitable places. Transit connects and expands access to the more distant parts of TOD places and beyond, while bicycling networks expand a person's reach of transit services and allows for a variety of mobility options in TOD places.

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) is charged with regional financial oversight, funding, and transit planning for the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Metra and Pace bus and ADA paratransit. The RTA region serves two million riders each weekday in six counties with 7,200 transit route miles throughout Northeastern Illinois.

The RTA's Community Planning program provides funding as well as technical assistance to municipalities in support of transit-oriented development planning projects and for tasks related to implementing TOD Plans. Since 1998 the RTA has helped municipalities across the six county region with developing TOD plans, updating the zoning codes in their TOD areas as well as connecting them with the developer community. The program is funded using a combination of RTA, local and federal funding sources.