



TOD Toolkit: What to Look for in Good TOD

About this Checklist

This checklist is designed to help evaluate the specific elements and items that go into transit-supportive station area plans and development proposals. It is not expected, or necessary, for all of the items listed to be included for a project to be a successful transit-oriented development (TOD). Ultimately, good TOD depends on the successful integration of a carefully-designed transit system and carefully-designed development. An important element of successful TOD is engagement of the residents, the development community, the transit agency, and local governments to ensure that a balance of objectives is achieved. This check list provides a menu of elements contributing to high-quality TOD that acknowledges the importance of good design, equitable development, market demand, and transportation needs.

Local land use planners developing station area plans, architects and planners preparing development proposals, and development review staff will find these questions most helpful. Local elected officials and citizens can also use these questions as a guide for their own review of proposed plans and development proposals.

Again, not all questions need to be marked YES, but the goal is to achieve as many as possible, with a priority placed on those most important to the local community.

Station Area Planning

Planning for potential station areas may begin at any time, but early planning may help improve a transit system's land use rating during the evaluation process for federal funding. Answering "yes" to all of these questions is a good indication that the plan provides a good framework for development that will support increased ridership and a healthy neighborhood.

Plan Area	Y	N	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the planning area include at least the 1/2-mile radius around the transit station?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the plan address the use of land, the design of streets for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit, and access to transit facilities?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the planning process involve the community in decision-making?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the plan include a section on implementation and identify responsible parties for making the plan a reality?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the plan call for clustering the densest development around the transit station and other activity centers, with gradually decreasing densities further from the station?

Land Use Planning	Y	N	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the plan call for clustering the densest development around the transit station and other activity centers, with gradually decreasing densities further from the station?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are the planned densities appropriate for the type of station area and its location?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are the planned uses transit-friendly? Will people traveling to them find it convenient to use transit?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will the planned mix of uses attract people throughout the day/night and week?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are non-compatible uses such as car washes, drive-throughs or auto dealerships phased out over time?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are uses included that would be conveniences for surrounding residents, workers, and transit patrons, eg. coffee and newspapers, daycare and drycleaners?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will new and existing residents and workers generate enough demand to support proposed retail uses?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will there be a phasing program for the different retail, commercial and housing uses based on market demand and financing?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If vertical mixed use is not feasible (i.e. mixing uses in one building or project), are there opportunities to mix uses horizontally (i.e. mixing uses throughout the neighborhood in different projects)?	

Transportation & Urban Design	Y	N	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are sidewalks and intersections designed for safe movement by all users, including pedestrians of all ages and abilities?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are streets designed to provide access for bicycles or is there a planned network of bicycle routes?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do streets provide access for transit vehicles and their operational needs, i.e. bus pull-outs, adequate turning radius if applicable?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are most of the roads through a project designed for speeds less than 25 miles per hour?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the design of public spaces appropriate to adjacent uses? (eg. parks and playgrounds in residential areas, public plazas in commercial and retail areas)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are public spaces and parks designed accessible to other uses and well connected to regional open space networks?	

Station Area Planning

Building Design	Y	N	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do buildings avoid placing blank walls along sidewalks and walkways?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are buildings required to build to the lot line or street frontage?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is parking hidden from view from the street behind buildings or in parking structures lined with other uses, such as retail or residential?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are there incentives or requirements for environmentally sustainable design, creation of public green spaces, and construction of buildings?

Affordability	Y	N	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will market-rate residential projects be required or encouraged to provide a proportion of subsidized affordable housing with incentives?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is any land set aside for subsidized housing?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are there plans to preserve, rehabilitate or replace existing affordable housing?

Parking	Y	N	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will there be on-street parking to buffer pedestrians from street traffic and create a reserve of short-term parking?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are there reduced parking requirements for buildings and uses most likely to attract transit riders?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do streets provide access for transit vehicles and their operational needs, i.e. bus pull-outs, adequate turning radius if applicable?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is parking priced to encourage transit use over driving?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do parking fees go to local improvements such as transit?

Notes

Development Proposals

Individual developer proposals are the last opportunity to assess good TOD. These proposals often prompt the most questions because they include the most details. At this point, it is also important to look at how proposals for different parts of a station area will work together. Answering “yes” to all of these questions is a good indication that the proposal will contribute to a healthy, vibrant, transit-oriented neighborhood.

Building Design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do windows and doors of proposed buildings face the street and/or public parks and plazas?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are buildings placed and designed to encourage access to the rest of the neighborhood?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are building designs interesting by themselves and visually appealing?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do buildings include the use of high-quality, sustainable materials and energy efficient design?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do buildings include the use of high-quality, sustainable materials and energy efficient design?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do buildings respect the scale and design of existing development and other planned development?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do buildings come all the way to the street or build-to line?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do buildings avoid placing blank walls along sidewalks and walkways?	

Affordability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do market-rate residential projects include a variety of sizes and types of units that give different-sized households a range of choices?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are there requirements for new affordable housing as elements of market-rate projects?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are there development incentives, such as density bonuses, reduced parking requirements or other incentives, or other funding sources to support the construction of affordable units?	

Mix of Uses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are proposed uses transit-friendly? Will many of the people traveling to them find it convenient to use transit rather than a car? (e.g. stand-alone “big-box” retail is not easily accessible other than in a car)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will the planned mix of uses attract people around the clock and throughout the week?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are uses included that would be conveniences for surrounding residents, commercial tenants and transit patrons, eg. coffee and newspapers, daycare and drycleaners?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will new and existing residents and tenants generate enough demand to support proposed retail uses?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will there be a phasing program for the different uses based on market demand?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are there plans to convert interim uses – such as surface parking – as demand changes?	

Walkability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are pedestrian pathways continuous and easy to navigate?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are there protected places to walk if it is raining or snowing? To wait for the train?
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do buildings include a clear entrance so that people do not have to search for the way in?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do pedestrian pathways and buildings incorporate universal design principles for accessibility?	

Development Proposals

Car Parking

Y	N	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is parking screened from the street, e.g. a structured lot “wrapped” by residential or commercial space or a surface lot behind the building it serves?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are different uses sharing the same parking spots at different times of the day?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are there car share parking spaces in private parking lots or on the street?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will apartments and condominiums separate the cost of parking from rents and home prices?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the property manager have a transportation demand management strategy that may include free or discounted transit passes?

Notes