



Helping Communities face the challenges and impacts of growth while maintaining their character and sense of place.

iTRaC is the Nashua Regional Planning Commission's new approach to community planning that focuses on integrating transportation, land use and environmental planning. The program was developed to assist communities in dealing with the challenges of growth in a coordinated way that sustains community character and a sense of place.

Transit Oriented Development

Transit oriented development (TOD) is an innovative land use design method that concentrates a variety of commercial and residential growth within a 5-7 minute walk or quarter mile radius from transit stations. Both rural and urban communities that adopt this planning technique aim to maximize public access to transit centers which in turn encourages pedestrian friendly connections to the surrounding area. This design technique has the potential to create vibrant urban centers, limit the negative affects of urban sprawl, and help communities realize regional development strategies. The degree to which TOD can be incorporated into an urban center often depends on the amount of land within a quarter mile that is already developed. TOD projects are relatively broad and can include infill or mixed-use development, establishing a park and ride, introducing a bus station, or the complete reconfiguration of an urban center. For a list of the principles of TOD, please refer to Chapter 3.1 within the *Innovative Land Use Planning Techniques Handbook*. This resource can be accessed at the following link, http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/repp/documents/ilupt_chpt_3.1.pdf.



Benefits of TOD

Quality of Life

- Reduces automobile usage, diversifies housing options, increases pedestrian safety, enhances community character, and improves health through increased walking and biking.

Economic

- Provides affordable access to jobs, encourages employers to locate businesses near transit networks, reduces driving and infrastructure costs, and revitalizes urban centers.

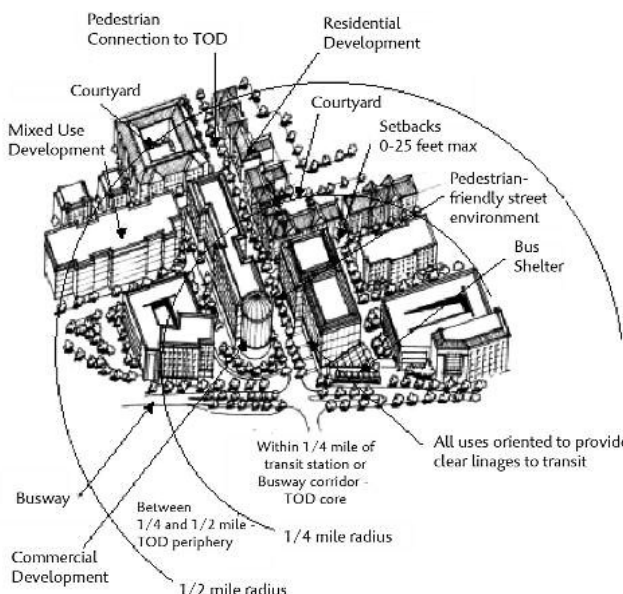
Environmental Quality

- Minimizes rates of pollution and energy consumption and reduces the conversion of farmland into developments.

Site Design

- Enables shared parking between commuters and residents, reserves room for bicycle lanes and parking spaces, and promotes a vibrant and attractive street environment.

Sample Transit Oriented Development District



Source: Nashua Land Use Code, January, 2006



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TOD Planning Process

The main contributors of TOD are public/private partnerships making investments to secure a site abutting the existing or proposed transit station, designating parking areas, and establishing access to the TOD site. Once the site is identified, the transit provider, public agencies, and development parties often collaborate on a planning study regarding the feasibility of the project. Some issues to weigh include parking, site access, proximity to retail and residences, design standards, and if rezoning would be necessary. Finally, local legislation must support



Source: Dan Burden

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Appropriate Circumstances for Implementing TOD

1. When stations are located in key community and regional nodes of activity attractive to typical market forces.
2. When the local and regional real estate market is active.
3. When local public policies and regulations permit or promote intensive development in transit station regions.

Common TOD Model Ordinances

District Boundaries ~ Should extend up to a radius of a quarter mile to a half mile from the transit station.

Density ~ Development should contain a minimum number of six residences per acre or 25 employees to help sustain transit ridership.

Building and Landscape Standards ~ Open space and landscaping should be incorporated into the surrounding transit station.

Local Examples

Brunswick, ME (estimated 2009 population, 21,992)

The Maine Street station in Brunswick, ME is a prime example of TOD for communities that are currently extending or anticipate on extending their transit network. In January of 2010 it was officially confirmed that Amtrak will expand its Downeaster service from Portland north to Brunswick by 2012. In addition to the proposed Downeaster expansion, the Maine Eastern Railroad runs seasonally from Brunswick and provides service to Rockland. For more information, please visit www.maine-street-station.com.



Source: MA Smart Growth Toolkit

Concord, MA (estimated 2009 population, 17,581)



Source: JHR Development

Concord, MA began envisioning TOD in 1987 as part of its Long Range Plan. The Concord Common development is located next to the Concord Center commuter rail station and is home to retail and office space, a restaurant, and apartments. A landscaped pathway from the development to the station provides an appealing experience for pedestrians and bicyclists alike. For more information, please visit http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/pages/SG-CS-tod.html.

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Legal Basis in NH

- RSA 672:21 provides legal basis for adopting a TOD zoning ordinance.
- RSA 674:2 and 674:3 mandates the development of municipal master plans which should be reviewed and implemented to create the regulations that encourage TOD.



Source: NRPC Staff



For more details on this topic or an overview of the entire iTRaC program, visit www.nashuarpc.org/landuse. or contact Camille Pattison, iTRaC Program Manager, at camillep@nashuarpc.org or 603-424-2240 x14. Nashua Regional Planning Commission in partnership with the NH Department of Transportation & the NH Office of Energy and Planning.

